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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

Our present number contains a larger measure than usual of reports of meetings, which may possibly try the patience of some of our readers. But without any apology we make bold to say that they contain matter which will repay careful study. We had hoped also to print in full Dr. Klein's sermon at the meeting of the Provincial Assembly, but this we may yet be able to do. "Differences of administration, but one Spirit," is perhaps the moral to be drawn from these reports, and it is worth pondering.

IN Parliament, and in various meetings of churchmen, there have recently been very vigorous discussions on the subject of ritualism, the use of unauthorised services, and other departures from the standard of the Prayer-Book. Strong things have been said as to the obligation of clergymen to be true to their vows, and the Bishops have been importuned to take more vigorous measures to maintain the principles of the Church of England. Even at the anniversary meeting of the English Church Union a resolution was passed affirming that the Union was prepared to give "all possible support to the lawful authority of the Bishops as ordinaries in the settlement of liturgical difficulties, humbly confiding that, as members of the Catholic Episcopate, they will impose nothing on the consciences of the clergy and laity which is contrary to the teaching and practice of the whole Catholic Church of Christ."

IN the Church of England the tendency always is for moderate councils to prevail. The Bishop of Rochester, as reported in the *Guardian*, spoke some wise and prudent words at a recent Diocesan Conference, in reference to present disputes in the Churches. The following is the close of his address :—

It is not from a timid love of middle ways, or from opportunist dread of practical compli-

cations, but for reasons of deep religious significance, as well as for reasons of charity, that I ask the "advanced" men to reconsider some features and tendencies of their action, and I ask it with the voice of authority, though used now not to dictate but to persuade.

I think that I may venture to take into my own mouth the words which Addison wrote in his *Spectator* nearly two centuries ago :—"If I can any way assuage private Inflammations or allay public Ferments, I shall apply myself to it with my utmost Endeavours, but will never let my Heart reproach me with having done anything towards increasing those Feuds and Animosities that extinguish Religion, deface Government, and make a Nation (might he not have added a Church ?) miserable."

And, as my last words, I bid and invite you all to the happy, vigorous, prayerful, united prosecution of our common work, the work of our beloved Church. . . .

Life unites where opinion divides. That in the last ten or twenty years this has largely been found true is your experience as well as mine is, perhaps, our brightest ground of hope. That we may find it increasingly true, year by year, is the object to which every loving son of the Church should lend his continual effort and care.

THE present position of the Nonconformist Marriages (Attendance of Registrars) Bill does not seem to be satisfactory. A Bill was originally introduced by Mr. R. W. Perks, but what emerged last week from the Committee stage was something very different. We are not clear as to all the details of what appears to be now a rather complicated measure, but it seems that much more serious responsibilities are to be laid on ministers duly recognised as competent to perform marriages than Mr. Perks originally contemplated, and the present liberty of ministers to officiate wherever their services are required seems likely to be curtailed. The Bill, if we are not mistaken, is only permissive, and even if it should become law, will perhaps not be largely adopted. But if reform is needed, it ought to be effectual.

At the London yearly meeting of the Society of Friends a discussion took place as to entering into correspondence with the "Hicksite" branch of the Society in America. There is evidently a movement of sympathy towards brethren long unrecognised, though no decisive step has yet been taken. The current number of the *British Friend* has the following editorial note :—

It would be a general convenience if we could agree to use a name for the Friends who separated in 1827, which should not be a partisan nickname, false to history, and entirely repudiated by the Friends themselves. The name "Hicksite" has all these bad characteristics, and is no more appropriate than the term Evansites or Gurneyites would have been had these Friends in their turn retaliated by

calling the "Orthodox" after their leaders. Happily, the right word already exists, and is in use in America. These Friends call themselves the "Liberal" Friends, when obliged to make a distinction; just as others speak of themselves as "Conservative" or "Progressive." It is always more courteous to call persons by the name they prefer, and "Liberal" with a capital does not mean the same as liberal-minded, nor imply that others are illiberal. It is a well-known technical term in theology as in politics, and denotes the school of thought to which these Friends, generally speaking, belong.

As was generally expected, at least among supporters of the Board School system, the Government dole to "Voluntary" schools has practically gone into the pockets of subscribers. But that is the least damaging of the charges contained in Sir John Gorst's speech on Friday week. While the whole of our Elementary Education system came in for some sharp treatment, Sir John's most scathing criticisms fell on the clerically managed schools, which are not only inferior as regards ordinary teaching, but *mirabile dictu!* the "religious teaching" in the London Board Schools, for example, is so superior to that of the so-called "Voluntary" schools, that, as Sir John says, "there is no comparison between them." The speech will certainly not be forgotten.

THE death of Sir Edward Burne-Jones closes the career of one of the most distinguished and original of contemporary English artists. An Oxford undergraduate, intended for the Church, he left the University without taking a degree, to devote himself to Art. Under the spell of Rossetti, the friend of William Morris and Holman Hunt, he made his way through misunderstanding and neglect to an assured place of fame. It is said that his greatest gift was in decorative work, and certainly not the least remarkable and beautiful of his productions are to be seen in windows, such as the St. Cecilia in the Oxford Cathedral, and the noble series in the Manchester College Chapel.

THE week's obituary contains no more pathetic record than that of the humble victims of an accident at Blackwall at the launching of the *Albion*. The Duke and Duchess of York, who had attended the ceremony, only heard afterwards of the fatal collapse of the old staging, on which women and children for the most part had been crowded to see the launch. How many were drowned we do not yet know; but heartfelt sympathy goes out to all the sufferers from this tragedy, and admiration as earnest for the fearless heroism that hastened to save those who could be saved.



THE PROVINCIAL ASSEMBLY OF LANCASHIRE AND CHESHIRE.

THE Provincial Assembly of Presbyterian and Unitarian Ministers and Congregations of Lancashire and Cheshire held its Annual Meeting on Thursday, June 16, at Heywood. The morning service in the Britain-hill Chapel was conducted by the Rev. W. HARRISON, of Stalybridge, and the sermon was preached by the Rev. L. DE BEAUMONT KLEIN, D.Sc., of Renshaw-street Chapel, Liverpool. Taking as his text Luke xiii. 20, "Whereunto shall I liken the kingdom of God? It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till the whole was leavened," Dr. Klein dwelt upon the nature of the kingdom of God, as it was conceived by Jesus. It was no visible kingdom he founded, but it was spiritual leaven he gave to the world, which should in time permeate humanity as a whole, and lift it up to the ideal life with God. No church subsequently founded by the disciples and those who came after them was universal, like this ideal of Jesus, and could not therefore rightly claim to be catholic. Each Church was simply a denomination doing its part towards the leavening of humanity. It was therefore vain for them to try to escape the distinctiveness of localisation and denominational existence. But they must be true to the new form of the eternal Gospel, speaking to modern men and women, working in their own corner, but for universal ends, thus taking their place as servants of the kingdom, till the whole should be leavened.

THE BUSINESS MEETING.

In the afternoon the Business Meeting was held in the chapel, the President, the Rev. P. M. HIGGINSON, M.A., in the chair. The amended roll of Ministers and Delegates having been read by the Rev. H. Enfield Dowson, Mr. Higginson delivered

THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS.

Having alluded to the changes in the roll of the Assembly caused by the death of the Rev. W. A. Clarke and of the Rev. George Beaumont, by other removals and accessions to the ministry in the Province, the Address referred to the eminent success of the bazaar of last year, at which the principle that there should be no raffling had been strictly adhered to. It then proceeded:—

The further point in connection with the grand bazaar, to which I will refer, relates to its object, which was declared in all the circulars to be the provision of school chapels on open trusts for the Forward Movement churches. The principle of the open trust was asserted and re-asserted at those meetings, and expounded by no one more clearly and truly than by the lady who opened the bazaar on the first day. In fact, the open trust became the Shibboleth, shall I say, of the platform in St. James's Hall, and, if so, it was a Shibboleth faithfully echoed from every heart without the whisper of a hiss to turn it into the ghost of a Shibboleth. The common sense of our churches recognised the open trust as the very Magna Charta of our spiritual freedom; and not until the English nation acknowledges the Magna Charta of King John as the Shibboleth of the political platform shall we allow the open trust to be only "the Shibboleth of the modern platform."

Thus we are carried into the heart of

that controversy which has been filling our newspapers and agitating our churches for many months, and I have deliberately chosen this bridge by which to approach it, because I am persuaded that the unfortunate phrase, which I have just quoted, and other language like it, are largely accountable for the features which have attracted the severest criticism and drawn down gravest condemnation on the articles which opened the controversy. If such language comes to us from the fullest knowledge and amplest learning, weighted by the authority of one of the most responsible positions in our midst, shall we treat as altogether unpardonable the extravagances, exaggerations, and mistakes of an enthusiastic young minister, who, with the zeal of a convert, pleads for great principles which once he could not understand, but in which he has come to find truth and life and light?

I hold no brief for Mr. Fripp, but having for years advocated, I fear but ineffectually and timidly, the same principles which he now maintains, I feel bound to acknowledge the courage, earnestness, force, and effectiveness of his advocacy, and to place myself by his side in regard to his essential principles, without making myself responsible for all his details.

"Two opposing tendencies" are no new facts to us. They have been with us as long as I can remember and doubtless long before—often a great deal too much with us. They have generally been represented as Freedom and Truth; and the controversy between them has much resembled the problem of the Owl in Mr. Froude's witty parable entitled "The Cat's Pilgrimage." "From the beginning," replied the Owl, "our race have been considering which first existed, the Owl or the egg. The Owl comes from the egg, but likewise the egg from the Owl."

Our thanks are due to Mr. Fripp for looking deeper into the problem, and expressing the opposing tendencies in terms which require a much profounder answer than the very simple eirenicon usually proposed as entirely reconciling and satisfying the claims of both Freedom and Truth, that we call ourselves and our churches Unitarian to-day, but leave the door open for any other form of opinion hereafter.

The obvious criticism upon this proposal is not merely that it would describe our churches in terms of opinion only, to the exclusion of any other elements of their life, but that the element it fixed upon is avowedly not a permanent, but a changeable and changing one. Our older churches have notoriously passed through many phases of doctrinal opinion. Has any thread of continuity run through them all and linked generation to generation? If so, what is it, and where shall we look for it?

Let me take as an example the case of our congregation at Monton. We have just celebrated the Bi-centenary of the first Monton Chapel. What right have we to claim any share in such a celebration?

Take the outward fabric of our place of worship. How little remains of the old Monton Chapel! Not one brick stands upon another. The very site where it stood has been surrendered by the living to the dead, for it has been added to the graveyard, and is nearly occupied with graves. In the new church stone has

taken the place of brick. The sun shines in, and we look out through windows richly light, the musical instruments of the olden time have been superseded by three organs in succession, the hymn-books have been successively changed, and the Bible itself is read in a revised version. Two things material have alone passed from the old chapel to the new church—the memorial tablets in the vestibule of the church, and the bell which summons us to worship as it summoned the generations before us. So, too, has the fabric of thought, wherein our predecessors worshipped God, passed away, and yet the great object of their worship remains, and by it we are linked to them in a chain of spiritual continuity through all the changes of opinion.

And we may note that in our older open trusts it is only this purpose of the worship of God, and perhaps, also, the administration of the Lord's Supper, that is actually expressed; and that the openness and freedom for which we are justly so thankful is expressed by silence and not by words, simply by the absence of any prescription of the opinions to be held or to be professed. We may note also that, while we are often told that we are indebted to Parliament for the retention of our old chapels and their endowments, the limitation which was removed by the Dissenters' Chapels Act of 1844 lay not in our open trusts themselves, but in a previous Act of the Legislature, which excluded Anti-Trinitarian opinions from the benefits of the Toleration Act of 1689.

Now this paramount purpose of the worship of God, in which we have found the thread of religious continuity through successive changes of opinion, is surely also the bond of union among simultaneous differences of opinion, and the real bond of union even where there is no difference of opinion. And is not this exactly the principle summed up in Mr. Fripp's formula "Religion before Doctrine"?

These, then, represent the two opposing tendencies; and the earnestness and vehemence of Mr. Fripp's protest against the insistence on particular doctrines as the special characteristic of our churches has led him so far in the opposite direction that he has been taken to mean not Religion before Doctrine, but Religion without Doctrine. I should rather have said mistaken, for he cannot really have meant this. "The true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such doth the Father seek to be his worshippers." Said Paul: "I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also." We must needs worship God through very imperfect conceptions of Him and very inadequate apprehensions of spiritual things; but woe to us if they are less true than we have the power to make them; for that no fervency of the spirit can make up.

Mr. Fripp's somewhat excessive insistence upon Religion as compared with Doctrine may call our attention to what I cannot help regarding as the very happy title of his pamphlet. We have, perhaps, dwelt too much upon the word "opposing" as the central fact, and we have forgotten that the opposites are, after all, only tendencies. And tendencies are only potentialities which may be restrained, guided, counteracted. The planets are held in

their courses by the combination of forces, which separately would hurry them into the central sun, or send them whirling through infinite space. Animal life is not merely disposed of by passion and impulse, but is guided and restrained by instinct. Human life is not the mere puppet of given tendencies by which it must needs be swept away, but is called to bring these under the control of will, and to make them the elements of an intelligent and self-controlled life. Very wisely did THE INQUIRER in an article, many weeks ago, substitute for "Two Opposing Tendencies," the phrase "Two Duties to be Reconciled." And can we really hesitate about the true mode of reconciling the two elements in our Church life, the religious and the doctrinal? The religious purpose to which our churches are primarily dedicated is of a *social* character. We do not build our churches and chapels to be used as oratories, for private devotions of solitary individuals in succession, though possibly it might do no harm if they were so used by ourselves and others; but they are intended for common worship, in which many voices join and many hearts are lifted up together in heavenward aspiration. For this end the great means and instrument is the contagion of common emotion; and we have probably all of us found ourselves even more deeply touched and more truly uplifted by some services to which we could not give entire intellectual assent, than by others in which we could agree with every word. The great religious emotions are the common property of all Churches, and superficial diversities of expression may only accentuate the fundamental unity. But a permanent contradiction between Spirit and Truth cannot be tolerated, and points arise where the fervours of the Spirit must be checked by the simplicity of Truth. Where these points lie it is impossible to define, for they differ for different minds, and each individual must be the judge in his own case of the point at which his integrity is compromised, and he must be responsible to the great Judge of all.

The principle of our open trusts re-expressed by Mr. Fripp as Religion before Doctrine, and translated from the terms of opposing tendencies to duties to be reconciled, implies no disparagement of doctrine, but, on the contrary, asserts that the responsibility of every individual in respect of doctrine is so sacred that no one shall come between him and God in the matter. Each member of a congregation must be not only free to form his opinion, but bound before God to do so. Each minister shall be not only free to preach all that he believes to be true, but bound to do so, and shall be entirely unperturbed to anything else. Whenever, if ever, the divergence in opinion between minister and congregation becomes so great as to interfere with common religious life which is the primary object of the Church, then they must part; but part not because the minister fails to comply with some absolute standard of doctrine, but because the relative position of the two frustrates the very first object of their connection.

This I take to be the true reconciliation of the duties of Religion and Doctrine, that the former is the object of the Church to cultivate and nourish in conditions of perfect freedom, while the latter is the sacred responsibility of the

individual with which the Church shall not interfere.

Time fails me to refer as I had thought to do to those societies which perform for our churches collectively the functions which we have distinguished within the churches individually. The British and Foreign Unitarian Association, constituted of individual subscribers, has ministered, for the most part in a large and generous spirit, to those doctrinal needs which are the special responsibility of the individual rather than of the Church. The National Conference is the natural head of our Free Churches as centres of religious worship and Christian work; and its Committee, representative of the churches, has just received new powers of deliberation and action on their behalf.

But our churches have duties beyond themselves. Are we quite sure that what the world most needs from us is that Unitarian message which we are so eager to deliver? Are we quite sure that in that eagerness we are not concealing what the world still more needs, and we have to give? The crumbling away of partition walls, the meeting of sympathies spreading from opposite directions, are among the most striking features of present theological thought. Can it serve any useful purpose to keep up rival claims to the common ground, according to the direction from which it is approached, instead of proclaiming it as neutral territory, which the claimants shall jointly occupy as allies and friends? Can anything be more disastrous than the identification of great general principles of wide acceptance, such, for instance, as those of the so-called "higher criticism," or the much-talked-of "open trust," with the particular dogmatic conclusions to which in their first application they may have led? Yet, is not this constantly done under the Unitarian name? No exclusive claims to these principles for ourselves may be intended by us; but I am not surprised that such an impression is sometimes produced.

On the other hand, I am sometimes agreeably surprised to find how truly the principle of our Free Churches is grasped and how fully it is understood and appreciated by strangers. Let me quote a few sentences from a letter addressed to me by a comparatively recent member of the Monton congregation on returning a copy of Mr. Fripp's pamphlet which I lent to him.

You may or may not remember that I did not join the Church until I received from you an assurance that the membership of the Church did not commit one to a definite code of theology, but that, being based upon an open trust, it was free to all, who, desiring to worship and not merely to endorse a particular form of belief, felt that by meeting together they could help one another and do something towards raising the moral tone of the age. I want no cut-and-dried theological system. I had enough of that while I was connected with the Established Church and the Wesleyan body; and if, as Mr. Fripp tells us was done in a certain case, the name of Monton Church was altered to Monton Unitarian Church, I should leave it at once, and spend perhaps another series of years searching for some Church where I could join in the services without feeling that my right duty as an intellectual being to think for myself was in any way curtailed. I believe that a very large proportion of the people who never enter a place of worship are excluded by the systems of theology taught and preached to the exclusion of real worship.

Of course it may be said that this is not what would be intended by the Unitarian name; but surely it is well to know what would be understood by an intelligent and not ill-disposed outsider.

The truth is that God has entrusted us with a greater gift than we really know, and in a form which we do not altogether like. We would fain be the leaders of theological thought. He has made us the trustees of His most favoured sanctuaries, where we can worship Him in spirit and in truth, with no fear that creeds and articles to which we have pledged ourselves shall rise up in judgment and condemn us, with no doctrinal trust deeds to tempt us to the evasion that they are the business of the trustees and that the minister has nothing to do with them. Yet we bear the scars of a hard theological controversy which was faithfully fought, and the old wounds still tingle and leave us not altogether at peace in the sanctuary. We have a free shelter of faith to offer to many who sorely need it; and they have an earnest life of the spirit to bring to us who are often weary of the deadness of the letter. Let us offer, then, our spiritual hospitality freely, not trying to attract others as nearly upon our own terms as possible, but on such terms alone as we can offer them with entire self-respect, and they accept with entire self-respect. Such love let us not be forgetful to show unto strangers, and perchance we shall find that we entertain many an angel unawares.

The Rev. S. A. STEINTHAL then moved,

That this Assembly desires to record its profound sense of the loss sustained by humanity in the death of the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone, who, for the long years of his public life, devoted splendid talents to the highest welfare of his fellowmen with tireless energy, with fidelity to the dictates of his conscience, and in a Christian spirit, that lifted politics to a higher level.

That this Assembly bears its testimony to him, not alone as one who, by his statesmanship, achieved in large measure the greatest good of the greatest number, but as one who, especially, rendered eminent services to the cause of civil and religious liberty; that it remembers with gratitude his advocacy of the Dissenters' Chapels Bill, such measures as the abolition of Church Rates, the disestablishment of the Irish Church, and the opening of the Universities; the broad and liberal spirit in which he dealt with the admission of Mr. Bradlaugh into Parliament, and his constant regard to justice in all matters of religion.

That this Assembly pays its tribute to his powerful influence in the cause of liberty throughout the world, to his ardent sympathy with nations struggling to be free, to his love of peace and goodwill among men, and to his practice of righteousness between nation and nation.

That this Assembly desires to convey to Mrs. Gladstone and the family, the expression of its most respectful sympathy in their irreparable loss.

In Mr. Gladstone, he said, they had a man who had exemplified in every branch of his wide and varied career how beautiful a life became that in all things was animated by the spirit of the Lord Jesus. Never had they had a higher and better lesson in Christianity than in that life which for so many years they had looked up to with reverence and respect.

Mr. Gladstone differed from Nonconformists in theological and ecclesiastical conceptions perhaps as widely as man could do, and yet no one had spoken in the debate on the Dissenters' Chapels Bill

with greater power of entering into the spirit of those Churches to which he brought freedom and security. It was not the mere eloquence of the speech, but his comprehension of the purpose of their Churches which made them value his support. The same openness of mind and wonderful power of sympathy he showed in the matter of the admission of Nonconformists to the ancient Universities, and in the good wishes he sent on the occasion of the opening of Manchester College at Oxford. When he advocated the admission of Mr. Bradlaugh to Parliament, it was one of the most wonderful exhibitions of the true Christian spirit of the man, that enabled him to do justice to one against whom the natural tendency of his mind must have been so earnestly set. The same spirit was in his work for the abolition of compulsory church rates and the disestablishment of the Church in Ireland.

But it was not only in dealing with such questions that Mr. Gladstone made it clear how religion can be at the foundation of every kind of activity in life. In the great financial reforms he inaugurated, which brought prosperity to so many, he was prompted by the deep religious sense of justice as the foundation on which all State policy should be based, and so too with the questions of Parliamentary reform.

Mr. STEINTHAL then spoke of the reverence felt for Mr. Gladstone as being not merely national, since they remembered what he had done for other peoples down-trodden and oppressed; and then referred to his great activity in other directions, as in literature, as well as in public life. Having spoken some words of earnest sympathy with Mrs. Gladstone and the other members of the family, he concluded by moving the resolution.

Mr. JOHN DENDY, in seconding, said it was well that they, as Nonconformists, should acknowledge to the full their indebtedness to that great Churchman, but it must not be supposed that their interest in his grand career was limited to those particular matters which more closely concerned their own interests. They were an assemblage of English men and women, and they could not afford to take any lesser stand than that, when they desired to express all they felt and owed to the great life that had passed away.

Mr. Gladstone's strongest and deepest claim to their reverence was to be found not in his legislative efforts, his speeches and written words, but in the spirit and character of the man. The best of measures and the wisest of political devices must necessarily, in the course of things, become old and inadequate, and must be replaced by something more suited to coming ages. In what Gladstone was, rather than what he did, they must look for the permanent elements of his fame. Tennyson had painted in language that had never been surpassed an ideal of manhood. He showed what were the qualities distinguishing the highest and noblest men, courage, devotion to justice, honour, purity, human life in conscious daily relation to the Divine. But Gladstone translated that ideal into the real, he practised what the poet preached, not merely on the narrow stage of private life, but on the great theatre of public affairs, where difficulties and temptations are in-

initely multiplied. The example he had given, the spirit he breathed into public affairs, must remain a permanent element in the national life, a saving and sustaining element, making for the higher righteousness, the kingdom of heaven that was one day to come. He had served them greatly in his life, and his death had once more called back the loose and wandering thoughts of that generation to the real things of life.

Mr. HARRY RAWSON also supported the motion, and referred to the universal tribute of gratitude and appreciation which had been paid to Mr. Gladstone. In those solemn hours which preceded his death, the tongue of faction had been dumb, strife and contention ceased, every jarring conflict seemed by common consent to be suspended, and there fell a great calm. Of the extraordinary combinations of faculties which distinguished Mr. Gladstone none was more remarkable than his rare union of bodily vigour and mental power. These left him unfatigued when men of similar intellectual capacity, but of feebler physique, would have fallen out from the ranks of service. He was a champion of peace, but the lines not inaptly described him which the poet applied to a hero of war:—

A frame of adamant, a soul of fire,
No dangers fright him and no labours tire.

It had been said that he was ambitious—and so he was, with an earnest desire to increase popular rights and to extend the bounds of freedom farther yet. A love of power was attributed to him, but no one ever asserted that he used it for selfish or ignoble ends.

Mr. RAWSON then spoke of his support of the Dissenters' Chapels Bill, in the debate of June 6, 1844.

The PRESIDENT, before putting the motion, reminded the meeting that there was a volume specially issued after the passing of the Dissenters' Chapels Bill, containing a full report of the remarkable debates and other valuable historical matter. This volume was to be found in many of the libraries of our Free Churches, and he wished that of that matter there might be not merely a pious tradition, but intimate knowledge.

The resolution was unanimously passed in reverent silence.

The minutes of the last meeting of the Assembly were then read and confirmed, and the Treasurer's statement, presented by Mr. John Dendy, was received. The year had begun with a balance of £77 12s. 5d. in hand, £35 0s. 6d. had been received in subscriptions, and £13 11s. 6d. for sales of the *Record*; but £92 6s. 3d. had been paid for the *Record*, and there remained a balance of only £11 19s. 4d. in hand. The Treasurer suggested that it might be well to reduce the price of the volume of the *Record*, so that the stock might be disposed of. It was also reported that at the Manchester Bazaar the Provincial Assembly stall had realised £530 10s. 7d., and a subsequent sale had brought the total up to £616 14s. 5d.

On the motion of the Rev. W. H. DRUMMOND, seconded by Mr. H. P. GREG, it was agreed that the Special Committee should not be re-appointed, but that its functions should be transferred to the General Committee, which was enlarged by the addition of two ministerial and two lay members.

The Rev. C. J. STREET moved and Mr.

J. H. Hope seconded the motion to receive the report as to Missionary activity in the Province. There were 22 aided churches, and the total expenditure for the year had been £2,072 13s. 9d., the balance being on the right side in each of the four associations—the Manchester, Liverpool, East Cheshire, and North East Lancashire.

Mr. T. C. Abbott urged the importance of this work, and the resolution was carried.

The report of the Advisory Committee was also received.

Invitations were received from Longsight and Warrington for the next meeting of the Assembly. Longsight was added to the list of places where the Assembly may be held, and the invitation of Warrington for next year was accepted.

Mr. E. C. Harding was elected President of the Assembly, the Treasurer and Secretaries being re-appointed. The Committee and Advisory Committee were elected, and the Rev. T. Leyland was chosen Supporter for 1899.

EVENING MEETING.

In the interval between the meetings tea was served in two relays, and an organ recital was given in the chapel by Mr. W. Rigby, Mus. Bac., in the second part of the programme Mr. J. Chadwick and Miss Whatmough also contributing songs.

The evening meeting was held in the schoolroom, Alderman Healey, J.P., Mayor of Heywood, presiding. After the opening hymn the speeches were interspersed with songs by Miss Whatmough, Messrs. E. E. Beetson and J. Chadwick.

The CHAIRMAN offered to the meeting a very hearty welcome on behalf of the Heywood congregation, and then spoke of the progress they had recently made, during the last three years they had raised £3,000 for the work about to be completed, and this had been accomplished because they were united in love for their church and their religion, and in respect for their minister. Having thus put their hand to the plough, they would not hesitate until they had ploughed the whole field. Their work was in the interest of humanity at large. They desired no advantage not enjoyed by others, and would suffer no disabilities. They asked for themselves what they were ready to give to others. They recognised all men as brethren, of whatever race or colour, and as entitled to just dealing and honest treatment. Their settled principles were truth, liberty and religion, which were to be pictured in the new window in the church. A great responsibility rested on them, and they must not fall behind other Churches in their vigorous efforts for freedom and progress.

The Rev. H. E. DOWSON then moved, and Mr. FRANK TAYLOR seconded a resolution of thanks to the Heywood congregation and their minister, for their hospitable reception of the Assembly, and the Rev. T. B. EVANS responded.

The Rev. WILFRED HARRIS was the first of the appointed speakers. His subject was the Life of the Church. There was, he said, a great gulf fixed between the living creature and the dead, between one that was alive and one that was only existing. And it seemed to him they could do nothing better than to realise the thought of the church having a life of its own. In Nature, in the country, they felt they were in the midst of living beings, the grass was

living, and after a fall of rain they saw it freshening up and growing. After a few days the buds changed into flowers. And one of the most delightful sights was of the frolic of the young life, the young creatures of Nature. They saw how the spirit of God breathed life into the dead matter of the Universe, and how vast was the difference between the dead matter, which they saw in the decay of autumn and the life which stirred again in the spring-time. The greatest thing of all was life, and that must be their great aim in the church. One point seemed worthy of notice in that connection, that whereas they all realised for themselves that they were alive, and there was gladness in the life with God which they had, yet in connection with the church, and when they joined the fellowship of worship, they were very apt to ask why they should go to church and join in religious fellowship. They were apt to think they could worship just as well alone; they had their own life, and cared only for that. Many people joined a church from no higher motive than their own personal benefit, because it helped them to live their own individual life. But was that all? Was there not a life of the church? The church had the power to give something to the world which the individual man could not give. It received from the people who came in their spiritual thought and life, their help and strength, and then when it had been built up of the living energy of men who had laboured in God's spirit, it gave forth the life it had received, and set before the town in which it lived the church ideal and spirit, and went forth to save the souls of men, who never perhaps had entered its walls and never contributed a thought to its life.

That idea of the church as having life lay very near to the thought of Jesus. He did not strive simply to build men up one by one into the knowledge of God, he aimed rather at the larger life uniting men together in one community and one spirit. Whereas the individual man could often bring to the service of God only one or two talents, yet when a hundred men brought each their talent, in the church they got every form of human talent and human worship, and the life of the church extended further than that of any individual. In connection with their church-life they felt they would like to receive more help. They struggled to live the noblest life possible, to attain to the clearest conception of God, to go forth doing the greatest amount of kindly, helpful work. It was very hard out of oneself alone to get the inspiration for all that; and they looked to the great community of men, each one contributing his inspiration to the common unity. It was a sad thing, when a hundred men had the opportunity of building up a church community, a strong helpful fellowship, if half a dozen or a dozen kept away and did not do it. It was an infinite pity to weaken the life of the church, the life which went on in its love and faith, whilst the generations of worshippers one by one perished. It was an infinite pity not to build that life up with all possible earnestness. That was their duty in going to church, in joining a religious fellowship. They were part of the life-blood of the community of human beings, the church fellowship to which they belonged. It was their duty to see that they not only kept themselves pure to circulate in the living body of the church,

as particles of the life-blood, they must realise that many things which might not hurt them as individuals, abstaining from church fellowship, not being enthusiastic about it, keeping away because of the weather, not throwing their whole life into it, became a disease which was killing the life of the church. They must consider and maintain the life of the church as well as the life of the individual, that it might be filled to the full with all loveliness and life. By God's grace, week by week and day by day, they must throw into it their mind, heart and hand, as Christ also threw his life into the building up of the Church.

Mr. RICHARD D. HOLT was the next speaker, and he dwelt upon the great importance of their fundamental principle of the Open Trust, on which he supposed every congregation in their body and every individual among them was agreed. The principle was that each generation should be free to decide what was the true view of God and their relationship to Him, and how they should worship. None of the Churches which adopted that principle held their present views. They did not hold the principle because they were Unitarians, they were Unitarians because they held the principle. It seemed to him that the principle was so clear and simple that it should be received with almost immediate consent by all to whom it was stated. Yet it was not so; for after two hundred years it was still only accepted by a small minority. It was a mystery to him how anyone to whom the matter had been clearly put could refuse to be either a Unitarian or a Free Trader. At present they must admit that the general signs in religious matters were against them; the trend was in favour of extremely sacerdotal views. But there was a slight rift in the clouds. Those people had gone too far, and were beginning to alienate those of more moderate views. They would find the result of the modern sacerdotal movement ultimately telling in their direction as a refuge from the pretensions of the extreme sacerdotalist. Their principles deserved all support, and no effort must be relaxed. Each one knew his own opportunities, and they must not be neglected. Work must be found for each one to do. He hoped that in the future more than in the past they would have a clear exposition of their opinions. Often under the idea of not being dogmatic there was a tendency to speak of their differences in an apologetic tone. They did not wish to proselytise, but they must claim the right to make their principles known. They had heard at times a great deal about the re-union of Christendom. No possible re-union could embody any ecclesiastical organisation. It could only be on the basis of their principle of the Open Trust, by which it would be recognised that each had the right to worship as seemed to them best.

After the song which followed Mr. Holt's speech, the Chairman said that as the time was too short, the Rev. C. Roper would not deliver his speech, but they would at once join in the last hymn, and the meeting would close with the Benediction.

The following is the substance of the speech Mr. ROPER had prepared:—

Our pressing need to-day is to co-operate heartily, to marshal our forces more compactly, to concentrate our effort upon the essentials rather than fritter

away and divide our strength upon unimportant things. United we can do much; but divided there is no giant strength in us, and we degenerate into dwarfs. Do not let us get creating dread demons of our morbid imagination, and waste our strength in smiting the air, when there are very real demons we ought to fight, and achievements possible in the realm of the actual, which result in glory and honour and definite advancement of the kingdom of God. A Unitarian bigot and a Unitarian crank are more pitiable than the crank and bigot of any other Church, because they are traitors to the fundamental principle of their professed faith. I do not hesitate to use the name Unitarian, because I think all of us are willing to adopt a better name whenever it can be found; and a true Unitarian can no more claim finality for his name than he can for the definition of his religious faith. We want the best we can get in everything; but we can only get the best by whole-hearted co-operation and mutual brotherly sympathy. There are sowers of discord in the churches. Fortunately, it is poor seed that they scatter, and, therefore, it does not germinate to any great extent. First, there are those who want to dogmatise as to what our Unitarian faith shall stand for. They want to fix a standard by which we shall all be measured. They are trying to create a scare over the name Christian; and they would seem to place the leadership of a man before the inspiration of the living and loving God in the individual soul. They declare that our churches are crumbling into decay because they have departed somewhat from the Christology of former days; advance in religious knowledge and opinion means death, they say; life is only to be maintained by holding fast the truths of fifty years ago. I cannot sympathise with this attitude of mind, because I believe that religion is the main thing, and that newer revelations of God's truth come to men to-day as surely as ever they did in times past. Hence it is unwarrantable interference with religious liberty to use threats of disintegration or withdrawal of financial support on the grounds of heresy, when there is no reason for supposing that the departure from old belief is not conscientious and not the inevitable consequence of deep and enlightened conviction. As in politics it is possible to thwart legislative progress by ignoring the value of judicious compromise, so, too, in matters religious, the main concern is as to whether the divine in man is being developed, whether the human is approaching the divine character; and although the pace may be slow and the road pursued the place different from the one you had planned, it would be folly to refuse this much because you could not get all you wanted at once. Then again, in this connection, they tell us that we are alienating ourselves more and more from the main body of the Christian Church, making it easier for the rest of Christendom to deny us fellow-membership, or to join us in religious association. They would lead us to suppose that if we were not so advanced, not so free and untrammelled, numbers of the present members of orthodox churches would join us out and out. Well, let not this depress us. What do these critics take us for? Trimmers? Hypocrites? Professing one thing and being another? God forbid!

The pressing need for our churches is to be what they seem to be. If Christendom refuses us fellowship so much the worse for Christendom in the long run; but if we really believe that we have a higher and purer gospel to preach to the world, questions neither of ostracism nor alliance will affect our course of action one little bit. I am not concerned as to whether or not the Evangelical Free Church Council of my district includes me within its membership; its action leaves me undisturbed; but I am concerned as to whether I deliver clearly and forcibly the message which I believe the living and loving God speaks to my soul. That is the one sole purpose of my preaching; and so long as I deliver the message faithfully and fearlessly, I care not what direction the criticism of hostile creeds may take. Let us all be true to our deepest convictions, and tolerant of those who differ from us, provided they do not wilfully blind their eyes with the dust of bigotry, and arbitrarily claim finality for human definition and human knowledge. Then there comes the cry, accompanied by almost hysterical excitement, that we are being treacherously sectarianised; that an institution calling itself the British and Foreign Unitarian Association is engaged in diabolical machinations against our freedom; and that under our very feet there is a sort of gunpowder plot hatching. We are also charged with being false to our heritage, revelling in scandalous activities, disgracing our line of spiritual ancestry, and all because we happen to be true to our convictions—because we are not to be bamboozled into mere hair-splitting controversy at the expense of neglecting the practical demands of our church life. And when we say so the excitement becomes more fanatical and the threats more dire; and so we shut our ears and just go about our work, feeling sure that our real salvation lies in being true to our convictions and engaging heartily in the work that lies nearest our hands. To speak of sectarianising Unitarianism raised a smile irresistibly. We, you and I, are Unitarians. Are we likely to allow the book of our faith to be closed, declared final and incapable of alteration, modification, addition? Shall we declare that revelation is all ended? that science can reveal nothing that shall bear on religious truth? that advancing thought cannot reach higher spiritual levels where grander views may be had of the nature of God and of the character of human destiny? There may be bigots and fanatics amongst us who would anathematise the rest of us if they had the authority needful. I do not speak for them; but I speak for the men and women who deem God's truth the fairest jewel in the world, who welcome any new ray of truth from whatever source it may come, and no matter how it may hit dead against cherished opinion. I will not insult you by assuming it is possible for you to become narrow, self-opinionated, pharisaical sectaries. Finally, there is a sad pessimistic wail of woe raised now and again, generally in the south, but sometimes in the north, as to the assumed falling to pieces of our Unitarian organisations. Certainly our churches are not crowded as they ought to be. A convert from the Baptists said to me the other Sunday, in a Midland town, "Sunday morning service in a Unitarian church is the most beautiful thing I

know of in the world." If this is anywhere near the truth our congregations ought to be doubled everywhere. In the district covered by the Provincial Assembly there are churches which have sadly deteriorated within the last fifty years; but, on the other hand, there are others which register an increased membership; and the increase in money raised for various purposes shows clearly enough that democracy is rising to the dignity of self-help and independence—a trait of character which has to do with religion as well as morality. And we have ample proof that if the number of our avowed adherents does not largely increase, our opinions are largely influencing the beliefs of the orthodox Churches around us, and that they are standing mainly where we did fifty years ago. All around there are evidences of a great approaching revolution in orthodox religious thought, and in the practical application of religious principles to the solution of social problems; and I believe that in this connection our Unitarian churches have a great opportunity awaiting them. Will they take the tide at the flood? Will all the prophetic instinct and enthusiasm of the pulpit and all the earnest co-operation of the pews be invoked in this service? I confess there are some Unitarian churches that are a puzzle to me. There is something wrong either with minister or people or both. All around them are fast-growing populations, and yet within them there is no soul, no gumption, no verve; all is limp, painfully apathetic—even to drowsiness. The people say the minister is at fault, and the minister says that Gabriel couldn't rouse the people. I entertain a high regard for my brother ministers, and I know that, as a rule, they are extremely anxious to do their level best; but still I should be sorry to imitate some of them in their pastoral indifference, or others in their droning forth of dullest platitudes. And I know that some congregations are as hard to move into grimly earnest, enthusiastic, religious life as if they did not understand the language you spoke, or as if their attendance at Sunday worship were a bit of patronage. We all have a great work to do. We ministers cannot overestimate the importance and influence of our preaching at its best, or of the thorough conscientious discharge of all the rest of our ministerial duties; and you members of congregations should learn by experience that you can get the very best out of us by encouraging us and backing us up in all our righteous undertakings; that a parson alone cannot run a church; that there must be earnest and hearty co-operation and mutual regard and brotherly sympathy all the way round if our church life is to be fraught with power to uplift and comfort and bless. Our pressing need, therefore, is to be undisturbed by those elements of our church life which tend to disintegrate and demoralise; but to concentrate all our best thought and effort upon the noble work which we know we can accomplish, if we are only united as co-religionists and as brethren.

Go thou to thy learned task,
I stay with the flowers of spring:
Do thou of the ages ask
What me the flowers will bring.

—Emerson.

TERCENTENARY OF THE EDICT OF NANTES.

WHILE the annual meetings of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association were being held in London, our liberal friends in France were joining their orthodox brethren in a unique and very successful series of meetings at Nantes. The object of the meetings was, to celebrate the 300th anniversary of the memorable Edict of Nantes, and the Reformed Church of Nantes generously invited all sections of French Protestantism to take part in the celebration. The meetings were opened on the evening of May 30, by a religious service, conducted by Pastor Couve, of Paris. On the following morning was the reception of delegates of churches, colleges, and religious associations, to the number of about 250, who had come together from all parts of France. The Reformed Church, to which the great majority of French Protestants belongs, was represented by M. Couve, a leading orthodox minister, and by M. de Schickler, the president of the "Délégation Libérale." These two gentlemen spoke on behalf of the "Commission Fraternelle," a joint committee which was formed rather less than two years ago with the express object of promoting a better feeling between orthodox and liberal Protestants and of watching over their common interests. Then followed the representatives of the Lutheran Synod, the Free Church Synod, and the Methodist Conference, the Deans of the Theological Faculties, Professors Bruston of Montauban, Sabatier of Paris, and Montet of Geneva, and, lastly, a representative of the students of each of the three faculties. As was fitting, the speeches extolled the memory of King Henri IV., who, in issuing the famous Edict, displayed a spirit of tolerance and a love of liberty far in advance of his age. All the speakers appear to have manifested a strong desire that ecclesiastical and doctrinal barriers should no longer divide them into hostile camps, but that all should recognise the real unity of the "Protestant Family" and work harmoniously together for the good of France.

The next item in the programme was the annual meeting of the "Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme Français," presided over by Baron F. de Schickler; then came a conference of delegates of the consistories of the Reformed Church, afterwards an interesting meeting of the Paris Missionary Society, and the celebrations were closed on June 2 by a soirée, at which the Mayor of Nantes and other notabilities were present.

The Nantes meetings are of good augury for the churches of France. No words spoken there were more heartily applauded than those with which the venerable Pastor Puyroche, of Lyons, concluded his address: "I ardently desire that this festival at Nantes may continue the work of the Lyons Conference, and mark the second step towards the noble aim that we pursue—the heartfelt union of all French Protestants."

A. E. O'CONNOR.

If I were to construct one all-embracing argument for immortality, and were I to put it into one word it would be *God*.—T. T. Munger.

THE CHILDREN'S COLUMN.

"WRITE these words in our hearts, O Lord, we beseech Thee."

The oldest writing we know of is on stone or brick. That seems strange when we first think of it. But when we think of it again it seems quite natural. For what men wanted of writing was that it should last; and so they would naturally use the hardest and most lasting substances they knew to write on. Besides, stone and brick were the two materials they had learned to cut and mould. In fact, as far as we can see, they were the only materials they had to work on, so that, perhaps, they didn't choose at all, but simply used what was at hand.

Some of you may have seen on the Embankment here in London a tall stone pillar called Cleopatra's Needle, covered from top to bottom with this ancient writing. If you can go to the British Museum you will find in the Assyrian Room an immense quantity of writing on bricks or clay tablets, some small, some large, many broken; and if someone is with you who can explain them, you will find it wonderful to touch thus bits of the life of so many thousands of years ago. Names of people, their bargains, and their contracts, their marriages, their customs, their battles, their laws and their beliefs, and domestic habits, all preserved to us by being written on these clay tablets.

Of course, what is in the Museum is only a very little of that past life, fragments of what were once State Records and Kings' Libraries. And we see that libraries written on stone or brick must have taken up much room and have been clumsy to handle, and liable to be broken, as so many of these have been.

In our time most writing is done on paper. A book is certainly very much lighter to hold than a brick; and if we wish to write ourselves, how much more quickly and easily can we write with our pen than the writer of old times could write with his chisel! To be sure, paper is very easily torn and soiled, yet this need not happen if we are careful. And since printing (which is writing by machinery) puts it in our power to have many copies of the same writing, and to print it over again when the old copies are worn out, paper serves us much better than stone, both in spreading the knowledge of what we want to be known and in making that knowledge last. Whoever has something to say which seems to him so true or so beautiful that he wishes others to know it, something that he wishes to be remembered, writes it now on paper; because that is the surest way he has of making it known or remembered. He writes his words in a book, though a book seems a very frail thing, yet through the book these words go out to thousands of people whom his voice could not reach; and perhaps they will go down to thousands more who will not be born till years after he is dead. I think every one of us knows something of the delight and profit there is in thus having words written on paper, written in books.

There is another way of writing. Words may be written in our *memory*. In fact, words are written on paper that they may become written on our memory. If one forgot at once all he read, it could be of

no manner of pleasure or use to him. That part of all we read which is fixed in our minds, which stays with us, and is there when we want to use it, is the part that does us good. This is the reason that we all spend years when we are children in writing on our memory those things which our parents and teachers think most necessary for us to know. What we are doing in school is, transferring what is written in our school books into our minds, writing it there. Sometimes this is dull work, sometimes it is difficult work, sometimes it is delightful work. But always so much as we have packed away in our minds is what we have to rely on for our future use. All the knowledge in the world is stored somewhere in books. If I could only get at it how learned and how wise should I be! And yet only so much of it as I can take from outside my mind and put inside my mind will ever do me any good. Happily, we can always keep on doing this, we need not stop with our school days. What a delightful thing it is to have a store of true thoughts and beautiful sayings so written on our memory as always to be there when we want them; coming of themselves, without our having to rummage libraries and turn over the leaves of books for them!

This brings us very nearly to what we mean when we say "Write these words in our hearts." Words may sometimes be written on our memories without being written on our hearts. We have said them over and over till we remember them, without caring anything about them, without even thinking what they mean. Perhaps you may have sung or said these very words in the service so, because they were in the book or because other people were saying them; and if you had been asked, "Well, what are these words which you ask may be written on your heart?" you would have been puzzled, and not have known what to say. When I was a little girl I remember learning in this way the long speech of Stephen in the seventh chapter of Acts. I learned it with my head, but I wasn't interested in it, and so it was soon forgotten. It was not written on my heart. And this is what generally happens to what we learn with our memory only. To make anything stay in our memory we must care for it, we must love it.

Some of you, I dare say, have heard a story about Queen Mary and Calais. Long years before Queen Mary's time the English had conquered and held a large part of Northern France, and they were proud of holding it. Then the French won back nearly all the English had taken, till by-and-by only the town of Calais remained to England. And at last, in Queen Mary's reign the French got Calais back. Queen Mary had many troubles, but this was one of the bitterest. "When I am dead," she used to say, "you will find Calais written on my heart."

You understand perfectly what she meant. She meant all her pride and love for that last bit of English sovereignty beyond the sea, and all her grief in losing it. She could not forget it because she loved it.

So we mean when we say "Write these words in our hearts," help us to feel them, help us to find them true and good, help us to care for them, help us to love them! Then they never can be forgotten. Something will remind us of them

just when we need them. They will be part of our own life, part of ourselves.

C. A. F.

In the current number of the *Mill Hill Pulpit* the Rev. Charles Hargrove begins a series of sermons on Lessons from Rome for use in England, the subject of the first sermon being "Rome, the Mistress of the World." Taking as a text the woe denounced against the city in Revelation xviii. 16, 17, the sermon pictures the ruin of its ancient splendour, and the causes which inevitably led to its destruction, and then concludes:—

"If no writer of 'the Decline and Fall' has won the repute of being divinely inspired, none the less is the story itself sacred scripture, God's judgment written for our instruction. For, as Jesus said, the lesson of all such events is, 'Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.' The same law applies to nations and to individuals, and for neither is there security except in conformity to the laws of reason and of right. The prophet was mistaken when he wrote that the judgment of Rome was at hand, and they are mistaken to-day who foretell immediate disaster as the consequence of wrong doing. But it comes inevitably, though it may be long delayed; oppression, corruption, injustice, neglect of the poor, contempt for subject races, selfish pursuit of aggrandisement, indifference to the claims of weaker nationalities, the pursuit of wealth and pleasure, all these, the prevailing vices and temptations of great and prosperous states, tend inevitably to dissolution. It is not the wealth of this island, it is not the might and number of its ships which will preserve its empire—Rome was as wealthy and as strong—it is the virtues of our people, whatever they may be, which will save it; virtues such as we see upon the throne, which have won for its aged occupant the whole world's homage; virtues whose consistent pursuit made beautiful the life of our great statesman just departed, so that those most opposed to him cannot but praise him; virtues which, thank God, are not confined to those who hold the high places of our land, but are found among high and low, and had in honour of all.

"It is these which will save us, these which will ensure that England shall not be weakened and abased as Rome was. The promise made to Solomon holds good, by the law of nature, for all kings and all kingdoms, 'If thou wilt walk before me in integrity and uprightness, and wilt keep my statutes and judgments, then will I establish thy throne for ever.' For armies are not victorious only in virtue of their numbers, nor do navies prevail merely by their superiority of armament, but even in war moral qualities are of supreme account, and it is the want of integrity, and discipline, and devotion which causes the ruin of nations and of men."

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LEAVEN OF THE KINGDOM.

In the sermon which Dr. KLEIN preached at the meeting of the Provincial Assembly of Lancashire and Cheshire he pointed out that in the mind of CHRIST the kingdom of God was as wide as humanity itself, brought into true relations with the Source of all life, and could not be confined within the limits of any one Church, even the greatest. A Church which claimed to be catholic in the old exclusive sense, as being the one medium of Divine grace, and the one authoritative teacher of the truth, did not fulfil the purpose of him, whose name it bore. To shut out from the Church those who held different views of truth might prove the narrowness of the Church, but could not shut out the heretics from the universal kingdom of God. Each Church, however great and august, was merely a denomination among those who were working for the kingdom. The aim of all alike must be the strengthening of the true life with God, which is the leaven of the kingdom. Thus, it was urged, we must not, as a Church or group of churches, shrink from being a denomination—that is not to be avoided; what we must aim at is that we shall be working for universal ends, that we may be among those who build up the true life of humanity, in which is established the kingdom of God.

This may serve to define the position of our churches, as fellow-workers with those of other denominations for the kingdom. We certainly make no claim for our churches that they constitute "the Catholic Church" in the old exclusive sense, that they alone are the depositories of Divine truth, or that their standard of orthodoxy must be

accepted by all who would enter the kingdom. If they are obliged still to be a denomination, because no other churches will have fellowship with them, and they must be marked off from the rest by some distinctive name, they may yet hold their position of isolation as those who do not desire it, and in the spirit of their own religious life do not foster it. They may be rid in their own temper of all sectarian bitterness, of all pride and selfishness and narrowness of aim, and live and work as those who desire fellowship with all the children of God, and to belong to a union of churches truly catholic, having the one single aim of the worship and service of God in whatever makes for a true humanity.

What fellowship we may actually enjoy in our Free Churches as they are to-day was very clearly indicated by the Rev. P. M. HIGGINSON in his Presidential Address, and we desire to call the attention of our readers especially to the concluding passages of that Address. There is also matter deserving of very earnest consideration in the article on "A Free Church," by the Rev. E. P. BARROW, reminding us of what is required of those who are called to spiritual freedom. No ardent Unitarian need shrink from those demands if only he remembers what is the great purpose of his loyalty to truth. The obligation of our freedom is that we are bound to follow truth alone, with openness to all the light of God from whatever side it comes, and that we shall be occupied in our supreme endeavours, not with the clash of words and notions, but with the life of service and of love, which must be clothed in the divinest forms of truth to which it can attain. We must so declare our Unitarianism that it shall be felt to be a power unto life. So preached in a Free Church it is a rightful and inevitable testimony of the Spirit, and will be no hindrance to the fullest communion of worship.

The leaven of the kingdom must work in truth and righteousness and love. In spiritual freedom it will do its most effectual work.

A FREE CHURCH.

NEVER, perhaps, was a Christian Church so free as the Church of Corinth, A.D. 57. All things were "lawful," even meats offered to idols, and marriage within prohibited degrees. Men might preach one against another, women also, and uncovered; party-leaders might be followed; contrary views, even on matter so vital as the resurrection, might be held. But the apostle does not shrink from telling this Church that it was the weakest Church in Christendom, "weak and sickly," and the narrowest, "straitened in affections." So easy is it to be liberal in thought, and contracted in feeling.

What is exactly meant by a Free Church? Freedom from State control is one intention, from dogmatic subscription another. But the New Testament has no other note of a Free Church than

this: "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."

Freedom, we all know, has in itself no positive value. The savage is free, and the madman, the sweeping wind, the devouring flame. Freedom, in any fully human sense, is freedom to be bound, and religious freedom can be explained and justified only in terms of obligation. It is the play of ordered life, spontaneous, but controlled, progressive as a whole, because disciplined in every part.

Why, then, should any Church be anxious that the world should know that it is free? On the lowest ground, is it not a tactical mistake? What we are all pining for is law—a law which will hold us, use us, raise us. The strength of every mastering religion has always been its law. A religion which makes things easy is doomed; it makes no appeal, rouses no response; for there is an instinct in all men which tells them that perfection comes only with obedience. Devotion, dedication, service, sacrifice, and all other terms of religious submission, mean nothing if they mean not this. Laxness and ease of performance act only as discouragements to willingness and zeal—"if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it?" In fact the liberty of the Gospel is always described by its first preachers as liberty to exchange one yoke for another, the latter more attractive because, in some respects, more severe. "Strait is the gate" is a legend which has proved its power to arrest the passer-by. Why, then, should the emphasis be thrown on a less forcible appeal?

The spirit of the Lord which makes for liberty is that inner independence which can dare, on occasion, to be outwardly inconsistent. The spirit is free, not from restraint, but from restriction. He who claimed the Sabbath for man was found in the Synagogue on the Sabbath day. Fasting he both discouraged and enjoined. If he foretold the overthrow of the Temple, he observed its ritual. He changed the law by fulfilling it; condemned its teachers, and still upheld their office. He was as free from unreasoning prejudice as from unreasoning reverence. Instinct was balanced by sympathy, and he was neither fettered by form, on the one hand, nor intolerant of it, on the other.

But a Church may be free from external control and tied up by precedent, and be so anxious not to compromise its liberty as to be afraid to use it. Dogmatism, formalism, and even absolutism, will sometimes creep in, and be none the less oppressive for being unauthorised. When, on the other hand, precedent and tradition are little esteemed, and personal rather than collective freedom is asserted, then the question arises whether association so loose can be called that of a Church. For a Church is not a school of free thinkers, with a general tendency, but a congregation of faithful men, with a particular object, and no one can be at the same time both faithful and free. There is, in short, no saving virtue in any title, and a Church is not made free by being so named; indeed freedom is so delicate a thing, and subject to so many hazards, so easily lost, either through defect or excess of use, that it can neither with safety nor modesty be made ground of boasting.

A Church that would be spiritually free must free itself from the pride of pedigree.

"Think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our Father." To do this is to think the grace of God into a thin line of historical descent, and to think yourself out of fellowship with the faithful of all ages who have walked with Him.

The whole past is ours, a fuller heritage, a wider ancestry, a cloud of witnesses, a rich store of experience gathered through storm and sunshine, triumph and defeat, error and reform, revival and decline. In the family of God a "household of faith" becomes grotesque when it exhibits itself as a family tree. *Stemmata quid faciunt?*

In its search for truth it must not fail to look for portions in other men's creeds. If there is that also which is not true, as once the effort, and now the monument, of religious endeavour, it is at least worthy of the tender respect which we give to other relics of the past. Search that is not also research hardly deserves the name.

Nor must it neglect contemporary history. To discern the signs and feel the wants of the present time, to be free to adapt itself to fresh demands, whether for things old or for things new, is at once the privilege and the proof of liberty. There are those who would have theology and piety alike free—if they may hold therein. Reversion is to them reaction, reform innovation; be eclectic, and you only imitate, aesthetic, and you must be superstitious. The ideal they cannot conceive as other than the actual, to which they are accustomed. In defence of small liberties, no longer threatened, they oppose that which a larger freedom would fearlessly allow.

Lastly, it must be catholic in its reach and scope. It must not think itself along one social level, but strike up and down, study all classes, appeal to all natures, provide for all ages. Does it seek the poor? it must try to understand their spiritual instincts, their spiritual limitations, their dependence on rule and guidance in religion, their love, now of the emotional, and now of the external. Would it satisfy the cultured? it must respect their reserve; the young? it must relax its own. Would it be a home for liberal churchmen? it must give them that security and stability of order, breadth and variety of method, which as churchmen they have prized, and need not, because they are liberal, forego.

Oh for a Church so free that it could stand with open doors, and face every way, like a city set upon a hill, fulfilling its open trust by open use, a centre and source of many activities, a threefold type and embodiment of worship and discipline and service, a home of many sympathies and wide affections, securing to all who sought it freedom of conscience, and freedom also from those petty jealousies and small scrutinies which bind and cramp the life of small administrations! There must be that in Free Churches, as we know them, which is not free; or they would be more acceptable than they are to those who are supposed to be fettered, either by State control or by dogmatic subscription.

E. P. BARROW.

THE power of love as the basis of a state has never been tried. We live in a very low state of the world, and pay unwilling tribute to governments founded on force.—Emerson.

PICTURE LANGUAGE AND MIRACLE STORY.—I.

THE PHYSICIAN AND HIS CURES.

(Continued.)

"*They that are whole have no need of a physician, but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous but sinners.*"—Mark ii. 17.—[Cf. Matt. ix. 12, Luke v. 31.]

THIS picture of the mission of Jesus as being essentially a mission to the sick is thus painted for us by Jesus himself, almost at the outset of his ministry, and forms, as it were, a picture of his spiritual intention. It was, as we have seen, accepted in his own day as his own description of himself, and recognised by the Pharisees as a true picture of his peculiar form of ministry.

We have now to consider the further question: What must have been the consequence of Jesus' mission being represented to the world by such a picture? If his ideal be pictured as that of one coming to "heal the sick," how must an evangelist at a later date, or his followers and disciples in his own day, picture to the world the certain fact that this ideal was attained, that the sinners really were called? That it was sinners, and not righteous folk, whom Jesus gathered round him? And that, having gathered them, he converted them, so that they forsook sin, were sinners no more, but became righteous? How is all this to be pictured? Clearly in one way only, the Evangelists must picture, the disciples must speak of his success in "healing the sick." Jesus fulfils his mission, he calls sinners, "heals the sick," and as often as this is done, so often may it be pictured. And as Jesus succeeded just where the Pharisees failed, it is impossible to over-emphasise this success of Jesus in "healing the sick," or to relate too often how he here gained among the outcast masses of the people a hold on their affections and an influence such as the Pharisees could neither endure to see, nor were able to prevent. Not "they that are whole" (the righteous), but "they that are sick" (the sinners) are the subject matter of the gospel.

Had a record been left us in this particular instance, and the Evangelist gone on to record that Jesus converted those publicans and sinners in Levi's house, might he not have continued in the language of Luke ix. 11, "He welcomed them and spake to them of the kingdom of God, and them that had need of healing he healed"? Or, again, considering this last passage in its own context, and asking ourselves who were "them that had need of healing," shall we not compare them with "they that have need of a physician" and the interpretation of that former picture, and so read, "He welcomed them, and spake to them of the kingdom of God, and them that were sinners he called to repentance"?

A sinner being "a sick man" and the righteous being "they that are whole," have we not again the same blending of pictorial and literal language in John v. 14 and 15, "Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing befall thee"? The man went away, and told the Jews that it was Jesus "which had made him whole." In brief, if Jesus' own interpretation of this language is to interpret for us what was meant by it, we shall understand that in such pictures the

sick = sinners; Jesus healing = Jesus calling sinners; one made whole = a convert. [Cf. also Matt. xiii. 15, "Lest they should be converted, and I should heal them."]

And describing the whole event of men bringing their friends under the influence of Jesus to be converted, we shall say: "They brought unto him them that were sick, and he healed them." [Cf. Matt. iv. 24, viii. 16, Mark i. 32, and Luke ix. 11.] Similarly in individual cases, attempting some hint of the kind of spiritual benefit the man received, and whether he before time had been paralysed in will or blinded by prejudice, or of impure mind, we shall speak of the cure of his leprosy, his blindness, his paralysed arm, &c.

And when any blind Pharisee, or some blind-born disciple of the Pharisees, or some sick and sin-stricken soul is brought to Jesus, and hears Jesus welcome him and speak to him of the kingdom of God, and has thereby his eyes opened and his "sickness" removed, not only shall we record a remarkable case of the healing of the sick, but we shall record it as accomplished by word of mouth, with perhaps a touch of the hand or a figurative gesture or a little quiet talk apart, where Jesus and the sick man may stand alone and speak together in confidence, not overheard by the crowd. [Cf. Matt. viii. 16, ix. 29, Mark vii. 33.]

Neither, when Jesus cannot go himself, shall we be surprised if, like the centurion who sent his soldiers in his place, he sends one of his disciples to preach the gospel and "heal the sick" in his stead: for which purpose, as the centurion pointed out to him, he has only to "speak the word" to one of his disciples, and that disciple will go, and "my servant shall be healed." [Cf. Luke vii. 7.]

A new gospel and a new life of Jesus begins to open out before us the moment we take hold upon the vivid picture language of Jesus as being the original source of these stories of the healing of the sick. So long as Jesus was living and speaking, his personal presence may have guarded, to some extent, against the misinterpretation of his own words by his own immediate followers. But to those outside that little band the hearsay and report arising from this language must from the very first have been a cause of misunderstanding; and from those days to these they have seemed to most men to be records of the healing of bodily disease.

It is also hard to know how this confusion could have been avoided; or how, since Jesus so persistently used this language, his life could have been recorded at all faithfully to his own picture of it, had not his disciples and biographers adhered to his own method of speech, and pictured to us the calling of sinners, on this or that occasion, as the healing, not of the whole, but "of the sick."

The general conception of his mission, to heal not the whole but the sick, presented to us in outline by Jesus (his ministry in prospect) is taken up and followed out with painful fidelity in the Evangelist's records of his great success (his ministry in retrospect). And whereas the picture as a general forecast is true and lucid, the imitation account of his life is confusing. Nor can we ever hope to reach the truth till we have traced back those later copies and painfully literal imitations to their great original, and

interpreted first the one great masterpiece whence they sprang. Of that first great picture Jesus himself has given us the interpretation. In that picture there is no confusion. We see before us the reason of Jesus devoting his life to the call of sinners. This is the key to the life of Jesus, and this also was the cause of his death. It was for this that he was hated. This picture pictures the whole gospel story in a single verse. The later pictures add no new feature to it. When we have studied all, we come back to study this, the picture of Jesus "healing the sick" to the chagrin and confusion of the Scribes and Pharisees.

WILFRED HARRIS.

THE PHILOSOPHICAL MAGAZINES.

If the reader of the current philosophical journals is interested in religious belief, he can hardly fail to notice that the writers of the articles in these journals, much as they may differ in other respects, are all agreed that the conception of the Supreme Being which has satisfied most rational Theists in this country from the beginning of the present century must now undergo some important modifications if the growing breach between the intelligence in the pew and the theological utterances from the pulpit is to be lessened and removed. As this matter seems worthy of some consideration in a religious newspaper, we will confine our notice of this quarter's philosophical magazines mainly to those features in them which illustrate the above remark. The January and April numbers of *Mind* contain no fewer than six papers which have been read before the Aristotelian Society, the first article in the January number, on "Hegel's Theory of the Political Organism," being the Presidential Address to that Society. In this article Dr. Bernard Bosanquet replies in a friendly spirit to the powerful article on this subject by Mr. McTaggart, which we have previously noticed, and he concludes his thoughtful criticism with the following modest admission:—

Those who will carefully study Hegel's great outburst in the "Philosophy of Right" (sect. 270) on the relation of the State to Religion will see how far Mr. McTaggart's spirit differs from his. But this is by itself no proof that his criticism is ill-founded, and I should like to end with the admission that while joining as well as I can in the discussion that has been raised, I believe that we are only beginning to grasp the problems which it involves.

Neither the favourite topics of the Aristotelian Society nor the modes of treating them are such as to excite much interest beyond the range of persons who make a speciality of the study of philosophy; and our impression is that this solid and valuable journal would increase its usefulness and would more fully justify its own title if it dealt more frequently and fully with those vastly important theological questions which are discussed at the meetings of the Synthetic Society—the society which has taken the place of the old Metaphysical Society, and which counts Dr. Martineau and other eminent philosophers among its members. It is just possible, however, that the able Editor of *Mind* regards religious phenomena as chiefly an affair of the *Heart*, and therefore as not falling altogether within the proper province of his journal; yet this

can hardly be his idea, seeing that all great philosophers, from Plato to Hegel, have given much prominence to the rational aspects of Religion. But while Religion hardly receives its due share of attention in the original articles in *Mind*, the "Critical Notices" in that journal do introduce its readers to the most important new books dealing with theology; and in the January number, for instance, Mr. Charles Douglas gives a very full exposition and able criticism of Professor A. Seth's work on "Man's Place in the Cosmos." In this important treatise Professor Seth gives expression to the opinion, which we believe is now shared by many religious thinkers, that the attempts—metaphysically, scientifically or literally—to determine the essential nature of God or the Absolute as such are necessarily barren; and he adds "both religion and the higher poetry—just because they give up the pretence of an impossible exactitude—carry us, I cannot doubt, nearer to the meaning of the world than the formulæ of an abstract metaphysic." Mr. Douglas wishes that Mr. Seth had more fully explained "this most serious declaration, which, taken as it stands; forms a rather embarrassing conclusion to a metaphysical discussion." For ourselves, we cannot but think that Professor Seth shows his wisdom in not attempting any exact metaphysical description or definition of the Deity; for such exactitude will not bear criticism, and is in the long run always productive of scepticism rather than of firm belief.

The question as to the adequacy of the word "Mind" or "Spirit" to express the nature of God appears in a somewhat different form in a discussion in the May number of the *Philosophical Review* on "Purpose in Nature." This paper, by Mr. Howard V. Knox, of Oxford, is a smart, but not, we think, very profound criticism of the opening part of the Duke of Argyll's "Philosophy of Belief," in which the Duke aims to defend Teleology against the attacks of the Darwinians. We regret that Mr. Knox did not select Dr. Martineau rather than the Duke of Argyll as the representative champion of the Design Argument; for had he so done he would have found it far more difficult to achieve even the appearance of victory over his antagonist. As it is, it seems to us that his criticism of the Duke's arguments touches rather their superficial form than their deeper meaning. His main point is that:—

If the structure of organisms is due to mind in the same sense as that in which human contrivances are due to mind, it is the organism itself which has intentionally produced its own structure—unless, indeed, it has been artificially fashioned by some other organism.

This is, of course, substantially the same objection as that urged by the late Professor Clifford when he said that if the universe is the creation of a Mind, astronomers ought to discover some indications of the existence of a corresponding Brain. There appears to be some degree of force in this objection so long as theologians insist that the created and dependent mind of man can furnish a fully adequate type of the essential nature and mode of activity of the self-existent and eternal God. Probably, however, even the Duke of Argyll is clearly aware that such a view of God, though it is the best and highest definite conception accessible to us,

must fall immensely short of being a full explanation of that Absolute Being, who, from the nature of the case, cannot be by us a wholly comprehensible object of thought. The vital question is, Do the phenomena of the evolving universe bear clear marks of being directed by rational causality? Nothing which Mr. Knox says at all weakens the force of Dr. Martineau's and the Duke of Argyll's contention that they do bear such marks; and even those who regard natural selection as a *vera causa* are quite unable to show how it alone could secure the actual progress upwards in evolution. If, then, the cosmos implies the controlling presence of rational causality, and that same rational causality gives birth to the mind of Mr. Knox, and enables him to write his paper, we are, we think, justified in maintaining that the rationality and volitional activity of which we are conscious in ourselves afford a reliable clue to real features in that Eternal Ground and Cause whose self-revealing presence, alike in nature, in history, and in our own inner life, makes science, art, philosophy, poetry, and religion both possible and actual.

The same number of the *Philosophical Review* contains a long and very able criticism by Professor James Seth (whose recent appointment to the important professorial chair in Edinburgh is a real gain to the study of philosophy in Britain) of Professor Josiah Royce's lecture on the "Conception of God." This lecture, with the replies to it of Professors Morrison and Le Conte, is now re-published along with a supplementary Essay, in which Professor Royce attempts to answer their objections. Notwithstanding Professor Royce's fascinating style we do not think that many earnest thinkers will be beguiled by the charms of his idealistic Pantheism. Professor Royce sums up his conception of God as follows:—

The self-consciousness of each finite individual is a portion of the Divine Self-consciousness. The One Will of the Absolute is a One that is essentially and organically composed of Many. These many forms of will harmonise with the Whole, just by being, in a relative measure, free in respect to one another.

On this Professor Seth justly remarks:—

After all the ingenuity and promise of the argument this seems a disappointing conclusion. One fails to see in Professor Royce's final result any real advance upon the position of T. H. Green. Will is, after all, only "appearance" in man, its "reality" is the Will of God. Yet, according to Professor Royce, "a world of individuals more separate than this, more endowed with absolute caprice than this, would be a world of anarchy, no City of God but a moral hell."

It appears, then, according to Professor Royce, that owing to the fortunate circumstance that no human being has a particle of real freedom of moral choice, such actual cities as London, New York, Paris, Chicago, &c., have none of the features of "a moral hell," but are to be regarded in all respects true Cities of God. We venture to ask Professor Royce to give us in his own graphic way some faint idea of what sort of moral hells he conceives these cities would have become if the Supreme Being had thought fit to endow the citizens with some small measure of free-will. One would like to contrast Professor Royce's imaginary moral hell with the present condition of these "cities of God" which the necessarian constitution of human nature has happily secured

from all possibility of real aberration from the Divine Ideal!

The *Monist* for January contains a very interesting and valuable letter from Professor Bucken, of Jena, on "The Philosophical Basis of Christianity in its Relation to Buddhism." The April number opens with a paper on "Evolution and Ethics," in which Professor Dewey makes an ingenious but, as we think, unsuccessful attempt to refute the main contention of the late Professor Huxley in his well-known Romanes Lecture. The theological contribution to the number is a long paper by Dr. Carus, on "The Unmateriality of Soul and God" in reply to the criticism of the Hon. Judge Chase. Judge Chase says to Dr. Carus:—

First, I cannot see any distinction between your idea of God and atheism, except in this that the atheist says, "There is no God, the world is governed by law," while you say, "The world is governed by law and this law is God." Further, it seems to me that your position as to the soul of man and its immortality is identical with that of atheism.

We refer our readers to the article itself for Dr. Carus's elaborate reply; but must confess that after reading it we still remain pretty much of the judge's way of thinking on this matter. At the close of the article Dr. Carus adapts the hymn "Nearer, my God, to Thee" to the devotional needs of his co-religionists. We give the first verse:—

Nearer, my God, to Thee,
Nearer alway;
E'en though Thou other be
Than prophets say.
Other Thou art, but higher,
Bidding our souls aspire
Godward alway.

The *International Journal of Ethics* for January and April in no way falls below its usual high level in thought and attractiveness. In the January number Mr. L. T. Hobhouse's paper on "The Ethical Basis of Collectivism" is an able and temperate defence of a highly ethical form of socialism. A paper on "The Essential Nature of Religion," by Mr. Lester F. Ward, starts many original ideas and stimulates thought even if, as in our case, it fails to convince. The April number opens with a very striking article by Miss Jane Addams, of Chicago, on "Ethical Survivals in Municipal Corporations," in which the authoress shows that the elections in Chicago are by no means so devoid of sound ethical motives as on the surface they may appear to be.

We may learn to trust, she says, our huge and uncouth democracy in its ethics, as we are coming to trust it in other directions, for by slow degrees the law emerges, that conduct which opposes the ends of the common weal must finally give way to conduct which furthers those ends.

There is also a good paper on "Self-realisation as a Working Moral Principle" by Mr. Henry Sturt, of Oxford, giving a thoughtful and seasonable criticism of some features in T. H. Green's ethical doctrine.

CHARLES B. UPTON.

BRAHMO SOMAJ MUNDIE RESTORATION FUND.—The Rev. James Harwood (105, Palace-road, London, S.W.), acknowledges with many thanks the following further subscriptions to this fund:—Sir John Brunner, M.P., £10; Mr. F. Nettlefold £10; Mr. J. P. Thomasson, £10; Mr. Wm. Haslam, £2; Miss Ridge, £1 1s.

CORRESPONDENCE.

[The Editor is not responsible for the opinions expressed by correspondents. LETTERS CANNOT BE INSERTED WITHOUT THE WRITER'S NAME; and all private information should be accompanied by the name and address of the sender.]

THE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE.

SIR,—I cannot think that Mr. Steinthal's resolution was at all adequately discussed at the meeting of the National Conference on Whit-Tuesday.

The result of the prominence assumed by Mr. Wood's amendment was, as it seems to me, a tendency to treat as a foregone conclusion the establishment of some such Executive and with such functions as Mr. Steinthal and Mr. Wood alike seemed to have in view; for the attention of the meeting was almost entirely monopolised by the consideration of alternative modes of constituting the body in question and by questions of mere draftsmanship.

When these were disposed of, the closure was moved by Mr. Bowie, and then Mr. Steinthal's resolution was carried without there having been anything like a "second reading" debate upon the broader aspects involved in resolution and amendment alike. This may have been unavoidable, but I think it is to be regretted.

Mr. Drummond, the seconder of the amendment, spoke of "the extension of the corporate life of the Church" as the desideratum. From this point of view I suppose the aggregate of the constituent congregations would be regarded as the Church whose corporate life is to be extended—"The Non-Subscribing Church," or whatever the designation may be.

But what, exactly, is implied by the word "Church" in such a conception?

Does it imply any antithesis between those who are within "the fold" and those who are without? between those who are in safety and those who are in peril? between the children of light and the children of darkness with whom they can have no fellowship? If so, what becomes of the boasted liberality and comprehensiveness of the "Non-Subscribing Church"?

Even if not, there seems a suggestion that, at all events, the most intimate and cordial church-fellowship is to be reserved for those who accept the proposed scheme of organisation. Is it expedient to draw any such line of demarcation?

The matter would, I think, be clearer if we were more careful to distinguish between mere "Bodies" and that Church which we will not attempt to limit or define. For my own part I cannot see that people lay themselves open to any just reproach whatever if they form themselves into a "Body" for religious purposes, on whatever doctrinal or other basis they may, for the time being, find helpful or convenient. But the work-a-day, sometimes, perhaps, rough-and-tumble comradeship of such a body on the one hand, and the sense of the church fellowship on the other hand, which we say ought to subsist notwithstanding differences of theological opinion—differences which may, perhaps, render it difficult to join together in verbal expressions of devotion, nay, in spite of sharp conflict on practical matters; these appear to me to be governed by quite different considerations.

As matters stand, we regard the Unitarian body, I suppose, as a portion of the Christian Church, meeting in section, so to speak, for the cultivation of aspects of religion which particularly appeal to us, and which we think might otherwise be neglected. If there are those who deny our claim to Christian fellowship, that is our misfortune, and, as we think, theirs also. But shall we mend matters by ostentatiously inviting fellowship on a basis of covenanted mutuality?

If, however, we are to regard the union of non-subscribing congregations as a mere "Body," then it behoves us to take care not to endow it with inappropriate functions. I regard the proposals to organise a means for expressing an assumed corporate opinion on quasi-political matters with grave misgiving.

We are accustomed to assure those who may be in doubt whether or not their theology justifies them in identifying themselves with our congregations that they need have no scruple; that no one will assume to commit them to a position which they cannot hold. How will such an one endure to find that by joining one of our congregations he has identified himself with a body which makes a strong pronouncement, contrary, it may be, to his own view with regard to some proposal of legislation?

Is it to be said that only on moral questions—questions about which all good men must agree—will such pronouncements be made? But the matter concerns itself with questions of casuistry, with applications of moral principles, and about these we are not entitled to say that those who come to different conclusions from ourselves deny our major premiss. Furthermore: Are we so sure that the wide basis of association proposed does not permit of radically opposed conceptions of the very principles of morality?

On the other hand, I think something might be fixed in favour of some organisation of one body with a view to maintaining the continuity of our congregations, if such a thing were possible, without trenching on the freedom of the future. I know that I am touching on delicate ground here, and I have no solution to offer of a problem which, perhaps, is unsolvable; but still, I wish to point out that we are apt to be misled by a mere metaphor, when we attribute personality, and the capacity to hold some definite opinions to a congregation.

A purely open congregation of voluntary subscribers of money for the time being, such as are most of ours, may "advance" or "develop," as the phrase goes, in two quite different ways. It is one thing when new light comes to A., B., C. . . . who compose the congregation. It is quite another thing if A., B. C. . . . finding the services no longer helpful to them, by reason of a changed tone, cease to contribute their money, and allow their places to be filled by X., Y., Z. . . . who may have been attracted from outside by the development which has repelled the former members.

GEO. CARSLAKE THOMPSON.

Cardiff, June 14.

'Tis pedantry to estimate nations by the census or by square miles of land, or other than by this importance to the mind of the time.—Emerson.

YORKSHIRE UNITARIAN UNION.

ON Wednesday, June 15, the annual meeting of this Union was held at Leeds. The public proceedings were opened by a service in Mill-hill Chapel, conducted by the Rev. A. N. BLATCHFORD, whose sermon on "The Presbyterian Yoke" we hope to print in full in our next issue. The attendance was comparatively good, but as will be seen, those who were present felt that a much larger audience would derive interest and benefit from the preacher's utterance on this subject.

CONFERENCE.

In the afternoon a Conference was held in Priestley Hall, Mr. J. S. Mathers, president of the Union, being Chairman. The formal business was of the briefest, the report and financial statement being taken as read, and their adoption being moved along with the appointment of officers, &c., for the ensuing year.

The Report mentions the renewal of an engagement with the Rev. Jas. Taylor in the joint-pastorate of the Elland and Pepperhill Chapels. A hope is expressed that the Huddersfield pulpit may shortly be filled. A short course of lectures is contemplated at Harrogate. The vacancies at Dewsbury and Huddersfield have rendered more arduous the labours of the lay preachers of the district, which are cordially appreciated.

The income for the year included subscriptions £128, collections £80, and these with other resources—grants, dividends, &c.—amounted to about £361, leaving a balance of £44 due to the treasurer. An urgent appeal is made for further funds.

The CHAIRMAN moved the adoption of the reports and the election of the following officers:—President, Rev. A. Chalmers; vice-presidents, Mr. George Webster and the Rev. E. Ceredig Jones; treasurer, Mr. F. R. Pesel; secretaries, Mr. E. Basil Lupton and the Rev. John Ellis; and auditor, Mr. Ed. Bramley. He said the author of the pamphlet entitled "Two Opposing Tendencies" had spoken severely of them, but he had overlooked their virtues. He would have the world to believe that their churches generally placed doctrine before religion. He said he had little quarrel with Unitarianism as such, but he protested against the limitation of the Church fellowship to those who accept this view. He (Mr. Mathers) had never heard of a case where Church membership was refused because Unitarianism was not accepted; it was against the whole genesis of their existence. The author of "Two Opposing Tendencies" further told them that "the everlasting union of the divine with the human spirit is vastly more important and urgent than the question of the unity or trinity of persons in the Godhead," and that "a doctrinal name of any kind, whatever its associations in some liberal minds, can never be the name for a group of churches founded primarily to put religion before doctrine." No one would find fault with such high and noble aims, and unless he (the chairman) was utterly ignorant of the history of their churches, he would answer to all this:—It might not be to the fulness and height that they had wished, but their churches had striven their best to go on the principle he would have them go. But even their friend the author was not free from the tendency to formulate in words his opinion of a Free Church, for he said, "No question should be asked save as to his accept-

ance of our fundamental principle." Personally the Chairman objected to any formula, whether positive, negative, a mere assertion of belief, or even an acceptance of a fundamental principle that was demanded as if in answer to a question. The sense of their sonship of God and participation in His Spirit was of supreme and urgent importance, for their own good and for the progress of humanity, and yet their particular views as to the Bible and miracles, or Christ's metaphysical nature, were, as compared with holiness and devoutness and tenderness of life, almost infinitesimal in worth. The yearning of the soul for God was the permanent and undying element in man, while their intellectual conclusions respecting the universe and the Godhead were variable. Therefore, the only true basis for a Church was the worship and service of God, without the imposition in creed or doctrinal name of any particular theological opinions. By ministers and laymen this standard had always been proclaimed. How far they had succeeded in living up to it was a question for the individual soul, and not for the authority of any other, be that authority a minister, or a Church, or an Assembly. In conclusion, the Chairman appealed for more help, sympathy, and means to carry on their work. They had freedom in fact as well as in name, and they should let their faith be shown in their works, and let their works proclaim their faith.

The Rev. J. E. MANNING (Sheffield) seconded the resolution, which was carried unanimously.

The Rev. J. McDOWELL proposed and Mr. GROSVENOR TALBOT seconded a resolution of thanks to the Rev. A. N. Blatchford for his sermon that day, and on the suggestion of the Rev. C. HARGROVE the resolution was supplemented by a request that the sermon be printed, if convenient, in THE INQUIRER. The resolution was very heartily passed, and Mr. BLATCHFORD acknowledged it.

The Rev. DENDY AGATE then read a paper on "Missionary Work and Duties," dealing chiefly with home missionary work and church extension. He supposed there were two reasons why this theme had been chosen. One was because they wished to consider the possibility of a Forward Movement in Yorkshire—of efforts at church extension similar to those which of recent years had been undertaken with more or less vigour and success in other districts in England. He had been engaged in this work for nearly four and a-half years, and his observations would be determined by personal knowledge of the work in Lancashire and Cheshire. Assuming that Yorkshire was at least considering the possibility of the formation of new churches in large and growing centres of population, where there was a prospect of self-support before many years, they probably felt that they had already enough to do in the way of helping churches which would always need assistance. He suggested that their efforts should be directed to adding eventually to those which would be able to help themselves in due course. Why should Yorkshire be behind Lancashire and Cheshire in religious pioneering and in devoted toil for their Gospel? His paper gave much valuable advice as to the detail work in connection with church extension.

The Rev. J. E. MANNING, in opening the

discussion, pointed out that very important differences existed between the Yorkshire district and that of which Mr. Agate had spoken. He thought they would probably find enough to do to strengthen the present congregations, without attempting any considerable extensions.

Mr. J. STAINER expressed his regretful conviction that the congregations of the Union were, with but few exceptions, in a very unsatisfactory position. He thought the ministers were responsible for this state of affairs, in having so generally neglected the emotional side of human nature.

The Revs. B. B. NAGARKAR and W. G. TARRANT by invitation also addressed the meeting; and the Rev. C. HARGROVE in a very earnest speech maintained that they needed an "inward movement" rather than a "forward movement." He strongly urged the churches of the Union to draw together in common purposes, such as that of having a collection for the B. and F.U.A., and circulating a "localised" magazine among their congregations.

Votes of thanks to Mr. Agate and the Chairman concluded the meeting.

PUBLIC MEETING.

In the evening a largely-attended public meeting was held in Priestley Hall. Mr. J. S. MATHERS again occupied the chair, and moved the first resolution, which welcomed the Rev. B. B. Nagarkar, of the Brahma Somaj, and the Rev. W. G. Tarrant, of the B. and F.U.A. Executive; expressed sympathy with the world-wide movement to a truly Catholic faith; and a desire that this faith might be everywhere preached and all differences of opinion in doctrinal matters might be held in charity and mutual respect.

The CHAIRMAN said it had been asked, if Unitarians believed that religion was deeper, higher, and broader than any creed, and life infinitely more serious than dogma, why had they a separate existence? His answer could be given in a few words. It was a fact that they did form a group of churches, and believed they had high principles to uphold, and much and serious work to do. In many ways and from many sources those principles were often misunderstood; the current opinion concerning their principles was that their position was one of negation, and negation only. But their position was not one of negation. He believed it to be full of very great and glorious affirmations. For example, it was not negation, but a high and holy affirmation that there was but one God, the Father. It was a bright and loving affirmation to proclaim the humanity of Christ, and to affirm that man was not a fallen but a rising being. But there was something greater than the greatest affirmations. They must do their part in educating and raising their fellow-men, in bringing light and beauty and love into physical and moral slums, and in waging an eternal war against sin. Such a religion of humanity the world could understand and feel.

The Rev. CHARLES HARGROVE, in seconding the resolution, bore special testimony to the valuable services of the B. and F.U.A., whose representative they welcomed, and he regarded the presence of a representative of the Indian theists on the same platform as typical of the broad and liberal spirit in which the Association's work was carried on.

The Rev. W. G. TARRANT, in replying

to the vote of welcome, took the opportunity of referring to the multifarious interests and claims which the Executive Committee had to consider month by month, and gave illustrations of the extent of its operations, and the diversity of needs which it sought to meet. He said nothing could be farther from the fact than the suggestion that the Association aimed at a narrow ecclesiastical domination. He had been closely in touch with its work for some years, and he had always seen the most liberal policy adopted. Indeed, any other policy would be both sterile and futile; for it could only result in harm if people could be shut up within the range of a closely-defined orthodoxy and a narrow circle of thought; and on the other hand, he knew well that if the Committee aimed at any such rigorous definitions the congregations at large would not be dictated to, and the attempt must fail. He expressed his warm sympathy with every movement in their midst that showed the presence of earnest thought and purpose, and had nothing to say against the ventilation of schemes of organisation, except that in his opinion there was quite sufficient organisation amongst them for present needs. What was much more urgent than new machinery was a new devotion and greater zeal, such as ought to be the outcome of their great faith in God.

The Rev. B. B. NAGARKAR, in an eloquent address, described the methods and aims of the Brahmo Somaj, whose missionaries, he said, had far more opposition to face than Unitarian teachers had in this country. He rejoiced in the prospect of the mission of the Rev. S. Fletcher Williams to India, and he looked for most valuable results of his work there. If he might venture so far, he would suggest to the Committee that when the time came for a successor to Mr. Williams they would endeavour to secure the services of Professor J. E. Carpenter, whose knowledge of Indian religious life and thought was unique, as far as he had found, amongst them. As an illustration of the strength of traditional prejudice in his country, perhaps not without parallel in other parts of the world, he related an incident in the course of his own work, when as a schoolmaster he also used his opportunities of speaking to the people in the open air. On the occasion in question he sought to disabuse the minds of the people from the current superstition that an eclipse of the moon, then in progress, was due to the accumulation of men's sins; and he pointed to the dark shadow of the earth which was slowly sweeping over the moon's disc. On being met with the retort that the earth, being (as the popular science teaches) a flat body, could not cast a shadow of that form, he appealed to a youth, one of his own scholars, in proof that the earth was a globe. The youth, afraid to incur unpopularity with the crowd, got out of his dilemma by saying that the earth was round while he was in school, but when he left the school it was flat. (Laughter.) The speaker thought this was typical of a great deal that passed for orthodoxy. People knew better, but were afraid to confess it. He expressed his warm appreciation of the kindness he has received in this country.

The Rev. A. N. BLATCHFORD said he thought a hearty vote of thanks was due

to the Rev. E. I. Fripp for having by his attack on the B. and F.U.A. succeeded in rallying to it a great access of strength and interest this year. (Laughter.) He especially felt the benefit of the services held by the Rev. Stopford Brooke in different parts of the country, and said the organisation of these services was one of the finest pieces of work done by the Committee for years.

Mr. GROSVENOR TALBOT added a few encouraging words on the public positions to which Unitarians were called, and the high responsibilities which they thus incurred. They must not, perhaps, look for large numbers, but be well content if each one did a good work in his own place in the community.

A vote of thanks to the chair was moved and seconded by the Revs. E. C. JONES and D. AGATE respectively, and the meeting then closed.

Our old friend and contributor, the Rev. T. L. Marshall, is leaving London, after a residence of forty-five years in or near the Metropolis, and his address after this week will be Percy Lodge, Sidmouth. Mr. Marshall has resigned the secretaryship of the Presbyterian Board, which he has held for forty-one years, having also been one of the managers for four years preceding his secretaryship. This is the oldest of our Presbyterian Trusts, having been founded by Dr. Daniel Williams and others in the year 1690. Mr. Marshall's long term of office has been exceeded by only one of his predecessors, the celebrated Dr. Abraham Rees, who was secretary of the Board from the year 1778 to the time of his death in 1825. Mr. Marshall's resignation takes effect at the end of September.

MR. HODGSON PRATT has printed the Presidential Address, which he delivered at the annual meeting of the Peace Society, to which we referred last week. The great earnestness thrown into this work will be apparent from the following conclusion of the Address:—

In considering how we shall infuse more reality, more wisdom, more devotion, into our crusade on behalf of international unity founded on a supreme love of man and of God, let us seek the co-operation of the masses of the people. They have become a great power in the State, thanks to the spirit in which our late revered Statesman acted and spoke for more than half a century. The working-classes are free from many faults to be found in the middle and aristocratic classes. There is in them an enthusiasm for great causes, founded on justice and right, which carries away difficulties like a flood. We are fighting for first principles. We are fighting for a cause as to the sacredness of which there is not a shadow of doubt—a cause founded on the eternal interests of man, a cause which is of God and which He has committed to our hands. This is an object which the unlettered and the unspoiled can understand as well as; if not better than, the rich and the great. Let us, with their help, strive every day of our lives to make our nation the first nation of the world for its love of Liberty, its devotion to Justice, its desire to build up the Kingdom of Heaven upon earth. That is the great patriotism which does not separate us from, but which unites us in unperishable bonds with our brethren of every land, with men of all races and tongues, so that we may be one family on Earth, with one Father in Heaven.

NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES.

[Notices and Reports for this Department should be as brief as possible, and be sent in by Thursday Morning.]

Belfast.—On Sunday, 19th inst., there was held in Belfast a united gathering of the Sunday-schools connected with the churches united in the Association of Irish Non-Subscribing Presbyterians and other Free Christians. The proceedings began by a religious service specially arranged for scholars and teachers held in the First Presbyterian Church, Rosemary-street, and conducted by the Revs. D. Walmsley, B.A., Alex. Ashworth, J. A. Kelly, and W. J. Davies. Special hymns were printed for the occasion with music in both old notation and tonic sol-fa, and a supply sent to the schools to enable scholars to be familiar with them, and join heartily in the singing at the service. Twelve schools joined collectively in the service, and scholars and teachers were present from other schools where distance or train service prevented the whole school joining. Contingents came in brakes from Crumlin (14 miles), Templepatrick (12 miles), and Moneyrea (6 miles). Arrangements were made for scholars and teachers to occupy the body of the church, and there must have been nearly 500 seated at the service. The gallery was occupied by friends. Altogether 700 to 800 people were present. The music was joined in very heartily by the schools, and the religious service was very inspiring throughout. After the service 400 scholars and teachers partook of tea in the disused meeting-house of the Second Congregation, which stands behind the First Presbyterian Church in the same street. Twenty ladies elected from the schools of Rosemary-street, York-street, All Soul's, Mountpottinger, Dunmurry, Hollywood, and the Ormock, dispensed tea, and a number of gentlemen from the several schools gave ready help. The tea-room was a very bright and lively scene. The whole proceedings were much enjoyed and spoken of in terms of congratulation to the convener—Rev. Alex. Ashworth—who was ably and heartily supported in carrying out the arrangements by the ladies' committee, consisting of Mrs. Walmsley, Mrs. Fripp, Miss Ashworth, Miss Davidson, Mrs. Kelly, Miss Scott, Miss Pike, and Miss F. M. McTear. This is the first festival of this nature held in connection with the schools of the Association, and the hope has already been repeatedly expressed that similar gatherings may be often held.

Chesham: Bury (Appointment).—Mr. J. M. Bass, B.A., of the Home Missionary College, has accepted an invitation to the charge of this congregation, and is expected to enter on his duties in the autumn.

Choppington.—On Saturday evening, June 18, Mr. B. B. Nagarkar, of Bombay, delivered his lecture on "India and Her People, Their Social and Domestic Life." The church was well filled, about 150 persons being present, who gave a most attentive hearing to the lecturer. Tea was provided in the afternoon, a number of friends being present from Newcastle. During the afternoon a number of friends were conducted through the workings of the mine under the guidance of Mr. Jos. Carr, secretary of the congregation.

Glossop.—Anniversary services were held here last Sunday. Following the custom, common to all the local churches and chapels, the scholars and a large number of the congregation assembled in the schoolroom in the afternoon, and marched in procession, nearly 200 strong, to the town square, there sang two hymns, and then returned to service in the church. At both afternoon and evening service special hymns and anthems were rendered by the choir, under the leadership of Mr. Roberts. The preacher was the Rev. A. Cunliffe Fox, B.A., who has recently settled in Glossop. The collections were the largest ever taken upon such an occasion, amounting to £37.

Halstead: Essex.—On Sunday evening last the Rev. R. H. Fuller, M.A., brought his ministry to an end so far as the meeting-house at Halstead is concerned. Circumstances have arisen rendering necessary Mr. Fuller's removal to the adjacent town of Braintree, and in future his energies will be devoted to the work in connection with the Free Christian Church there, instead of being divided between Halstead and Braintree as has been the case hitherto. To the Halstead friends this is a matter of very great regret. Mr. Fuller's address on Sunday evening dealt with "the duty of the individual citizen to the State," and at the close he spoke some words of farewell, from which the following sentences are taken:—"If in anything I have said I have at all liberated your souls and enabled you to look out upon your fellow men and feel your oneness with them, or to look out upon

the boundless horizon of life and light, I am profoundly thankful. Wherein I have failed, be lenient; but if I have ever once touched your hearts with a greater love of your fellow men, to a tender and greater reverence for mankind and the life around you, therein I know I have brought you closer to God, and if, therein, any remember me ever so little, then my coming amongst you will not have been all in vain."

London: Essex Church.—The Hospital Sunday collection amounted to £140 0s. 3d.

London: Peckham.—The Sunday-school anniversary and flower services were held in the Avondale-road Church on Sunday last, when the building was tastefully decorated with a bountiful supply of potted plants and flowers provided by members of the congregation. The Rev. G. Carter gave addresses: in the morning on "Renewal of Youth," in the afternoon (to children) on "The Language of Flowers," and in the evening on "God and the Child." Good collections were taken on behalf of the Sunday-school Fund.

Manchester: Oldham-road.—A soirée was held last Saturday night for the purpose of extending a public welcome to the Rev. W. Reynolds, B.A., who has accepted an invitation to the pastorate of that church, and who, commenced his duties there a week or two ago. The proceedings opened with the singing of a hymn, followed by prayer from Rev. Charles Peach. Mr. S. Higham occupied the chair and voiced the welcome of the congregation. The two Superintendents extended a welcome on behalf of the Sunday-school, and Mr. Lord on behalf of the Choir. Mr. R. Fielding also joined in the expressions of welcome and good wishes. The Secretary read numerous letters of apology from friends who were unavoidably absent, amongst whom were two neighbouring Church of England clergymen. The Rev. C. T. Poynting said he had known the congregation for over a quarter of a century, and complimented them, not only upon having so beautiful a church, but also upon having such traditions of Christian ministry. Mr. Reynolds was not a stranger; and in welcoming him he did not speak on behalf of any particular body of ministers, but of all Christian ministers in the Manchester District. They all sought to bring men face to face with God, and helping them to consecrate their lives to noble effort. The Rev. S. Thompson spoke as one who had been for years a very near neighbour of Mr. Reynolds. He knew him as one who spoke strongly what he thought. Our churches are free to go on; truth is everything to them, and they had courage to believe that their Gospel would spread until all around acknowledged that its principles will bring to pass the kingdom of God on earth. It is the religion which has been rising and growing through the centuries, rooted in the hearts of the best men, and which is more beautiful to-day than ever before. He begged the people to help the minister by meeting him Sunday by Sunday in the house of prayer, not in the spirit of self-sacrifice, but from a sense of duty. Principal Gordon also joined heartily in the welcome. He said our religion had done much for the world and it can do much more; he spoke of our religion more than our doctrine. He was under an intellectual necessity to have his opinions clear in their outline, yet mistakes in this connection are not so fatal or successes of so high a kind as with our religion. Doctrines are both less baneful and less beneficial than is supposed. Our religion has produced great and noble characters, heroic men and inspired women. He trusted the people would pray and act with their minister, so that combinedly they might develop the religious life of that church. The Rev. W. G. Cadman said it was a pleasure to be once more amongst his old friends. He knew what happiness Mr. Reynolds might expect if only he touched the right chords. Mr. Reynolds had thrown himself so heartily into his work that the people could not help supporting him, and he felt sure that a steady and lasting growth would mark the present ministry. If the minister be faithful and tactful the people would be drawn to him, and as the years rolled along affection and trust will bind the congregation to him and him to it. When at Oldham-road he was always on good terms with his fellow ministers of all denominations; we could be true to what we believed, and yet remain as comrades of those who differed from us. Mr. George H. Leigh extended, as President, the hearty good wishes of the Manchester District Association. He spoke of the good work done there in the past, and expressed a belief that they would accomplish much in the future if they maintained the spirit of enthusiasm which characterised that meeting. The Rev. George Knight spoke as the nearest neighbour within our own communion, and he urged that in a district like Miles Platting the best and surest work was to be done through the Sunday-school. He was glad to know that Mr. Reynolds was a Sunday-school man. The Rev. Charles Roper also spoke in terms

of encouragement, and the Rev. W. Reynolds briefly responded. The latter hoped his people would all join in the work of the church. He knew there was more work than he could accomplish; but he and his people would seek the inspiration of God, and then perhaps their friends would not be disappointed at the result of their united efforts. The meeting then concluded with the singing of a hymn and benediction.

Newcastle-on-Tyne.—The Sunday-school anniversary and flower services were held in the Church of the Divine Unity on Sunday, June 19, conducted by Mr. B. B. Nagarkar, of Bombay. Large congregations were present and evinced great interest in Mr. Nagarkar's discourses.

Southampton (Appointment).—The Rev. E. C. Bennett, of Weymouth, has accepted the pastorate of the Church of the Saviour, and will probably commence his ministry there in September next.

Sunderland.—The Rev. J. Channing Pollard, of Lancaster, preached the annual sermons on Sunday week. The subject in the morning was the "Ministry of Childhood," and in the evening the "Aim of Religion." The congregations both morning and evening were very good, especially in the evening. On Monday, June 13, the annual tea and meeting was held in the chapel; a large company partook of tea. The meeting in the evening was presided over by Mr. Fothergill (in the absence of the Rev. J. C. Pollard, who was unwell and unable to attend). There was also on the platform Mr. Stirling and the Rev. A. Harvie, of Newcastle. The chairman, in his opening remarks, alluded to the unfortunate circumstances which had kept Mr. Pollard away from the meeting, and expressed a hope for a speedy recovery. Mr. Stirling then addressed the meeting, and reviewed the work that had been done in connection with the church for the past year, and concluded by moving a vote of thanks to Mr. Pollard, which was seconded by Mr. French. The meeting terminated with the usual votes of thanks. During the evening solos were rendered by the Misses Rutherford, Stirling and Davis (Liverpool). Miss Rutherford presided at the piano.

Tamworth.—The Sunday-school anniversary services were held last Sunday, when at the morning service the Rev. J. Howard set before the young people the "Elements of a Noble Life." The evening service was conducted by the Rev. W. F. Clarke, of Birmingham, who preached with much eloquence on the "Lessons of the Month." The singing of the children and choir was greatly appreciated by a good congregation. The collection was in advance of last year.

Weymouth.—At a meeting of the congregation held after morning service on Sunday last, the Secretary announced the resignation of the minister (the Rev. E. C. Bennett), who has accepted a unanimous invitation from the church at Southampton. The following resolution was carried unanimously:—"That this congregation learns of the resignation of their esteemed friend and minister (the Rev. E. C. Bennett) with sincere regret, and in accepting the same testifies to his five years' of faithful ministry here, expresses its high appreciation of his services in the pulpit and the value of his personal friendship. In all his future work Mr. Bennett can rely on the heartfelt sympathy of his Weymouth friends. This congregation also wishes to record an expression of their good wishes for his future welfare and that of Mrs. Bennett and family."

COUNTRY AIR FOR WEAK AND AILING CHILDREN.—Miss A. Lawrence, 75, Lancaster-gate, London, W., begs to acknowledge, with many thanks, receipt for this fund of the following sums:—Mrs. Hollins, 10s.; Mrs. Smithells, £2 2s.; C. M. H., £3; Effra-road, Brixton, Children's Flower Service, £1 19s. 6d.; Mr. A. Biggs, £3 3s.; Mr. R. Taylor Heape, £1 1s.; Miss Grundy, 5s.; Mr. John Warren, £1 1s. Miss Warren, £1 1s.

MISSIONARY CONFERENCE, MEMORIAL HALL, MANCHESTER, JULY 7th. Communion Service, 10.30; President's Address, 11; Open Conference and Resolution on Communion Service, 12; Paper, 3 P.M.

W. R. SHANKS, Hon. Sec.

WANTED, as CARETAKERS for Essex Church and Schoolroom, The Mall, Notting Hill Gate, respectable man and wife to live near to the Church. Wages £1 per week.—Apply, by letter, to B. E. JOHNSON, 34, Clanricardegardens, Bayswater.

OUR CALENDAR.

SUNDAY, JUNE 26.

It is requested that notice of any alteration in the Calendar be sent to the Publisher not later than Thursday afternoon.

Bermondsey, Fort-road, Upper Grange-road, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. HAROLD RYLETT.
Brixton, Unitarian Christian Church, Effra-road, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. J. HARWOOD, B.A.
Croydon, Free Christian Church, Wellesley-rd., West Croydon, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. J. PAGE HOPPS.
Deptford, Church-street, 11.15 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. A. J. MARCHANT.
Essex Church, The Mall, Notting-hill-gate, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. FRANK K. FREESTON. Morning, "The Limits of Tolerance."
Forest-gate, corner of Dunbar-road, Upton-lane, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. H. WOODS PERRIS.
Hackney, New Gravel Pit Church, Chatham-place, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. S. F. WILLIAMS.
Hampstead, Rosslyn-hill Chapel, 11.15 A.M. and 7 P.M., Dr. BROOKE HERFORD.
Highgate Hill, Unitarian Christian Church, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. ROBERT SPEARS.
Islington, Unity Church, Upper-street, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. G. DAWES HICKS, M.A., Ph.D. Evening, "Wagner's Conception of Art and Religion."
Kentish Town, Free Christian Church, Clarence-road, 11 A.M., and 7 P.M., Rev. A. FARQUHARSON. Morning, "The Pearl of Great Price." Evening, "Modern Discontent."
Kilburn, Quex-road, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. J. E. STRONGE.
Lewisham, Unitarian Christian Church, High-street, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. W. C. POPE.
Little Portland-street Chapel, near Oxford-circus, 11.15 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. S. FARRINGTON.
Mansford-street Church and Mission, Bethnal Green, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. W. G. CADMAN.
Peckham, Avondale-road, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. G. CARTER.
Richmond Free Church, Ormond-road, 11.15 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. H. RAWLINGS, M.A. 3 P.M., Service for Children.
Stamford-street, Blackfriars-road, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. FREDERIC ALLEN.
Stepney-Green, College Chapel, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Mr. LUCKING TAVENER.
Stoke Newington, The Green, 11.15 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. W. WOODING, B.A.
Wandsworth, Unitarian Christian Church, East-hill, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. W. G. TARRANT, B.A.
Wood Green, Unity Hall, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. Dr. MUMMERY.
Woolwich, Masonic Hall, Anglesey-road, Plumstead, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. L. JENKINS JONES.

PROVINCIAL.

BATH, Trim-street Chapel, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. F. W. STANLEY.
BEDFORD, Library (side room), 6.30 P.M., Rev. ROWLAND HILL.
BIRMINGHAM, Church of the Messiah, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. L. P. JACKS.
BLACKPOOL, Bank-street, North Shore, 10.45 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. W. BINNS.
BLACKPOOL, Unitarian Lay Church, Masonic Hall, Waterloo-road, South Shore, 6.30 P.M.
BOOTLE, Free Church Hall, Stanley-road, 11 A.M., Mr. WORTLEY, and 6.30 P.M., Rev. T. LLOYD JONES.
BOURNEMOUTH, Unitarian Church, West-hill-road, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. C. C. COE.
BRIGHTON, Christ Church (Free Christian), New-road, North-street, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. A. HOOD.
BUXTON, Hartington-road Church, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M.
CANTERBURY, Blackfriars, 11 A.M., J. REMINGTON WILSON, M.A.
DEAL and WALMER, Free Christian Church, High-st., 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. MELSON GODFREY.
DOVER, Adrian-street, near Market-square, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. S. BURROWS.
EASTBOURNE, Lismore-road, Terminus-road, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Mr. W. H. HOWE.
GUILDFORD, Ward-street Church, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. J. A. FALLOWS, M.A.
HORSHAM, Free Christian Church, Worthing-road, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. J. J. MARTEN.
LEEDS, Mill Hill, 10.45 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. O. HARGROVE.
LIVERPOOL, Hope-street Church, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. D. DAVIS.
LIVERPOOL, Ancient Chapel of Toxteth, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. W. J. JUFF.

LIVERPOOL, Renshaw-street Chapel, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. Dr. KLEIN, "Religion and Pleasure."

MANCHESTER, Sale, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. JAMES FORREST, M.A.

MANCHESTER, Strangeways, 10.30 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Sunday School Anniversary, Flower Services, Rev. J. BOUGHEY. Afternoon, Cantata, "Harvest Home." Address, Rev. W. R. SHANKS.

OXFORD, Manchester College, 11.30 A.M., Rev. Dr. DRUMMOND.

PORTSMOUTH, General Baptist Chapel, St. Thomas-street, 6.45 P.M., Mr. THOMAS BOND.

PORTSMOUTH, High-street Chapel, 11 A.M. and 6.45 P.M., Mr. G. COSENS PRIOR.

RAMSGATE, Assembly Rooms, High street, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Mr. J. R. MACDONALD.

READING, Unitarian Free Church, London-road, 11.15 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. E. A. VOYSEY.

SCARBOROUGH, Westborough, 10.45 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. E. L. H. THOMAS, B.A.

SOUTHPORT, Portland-street Church, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. C. H. WELLBELOVED.

TORQUAY, Unity Hall, Lower Union-street, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. PRIESTLEY PRIME.

TUNBRIDGE WELLS, Mechanics' Institute, Dudley-road, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M.

WYMOUTH, Oddfellows' Hall, Market-street, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. E. C. BENNETT.

YORK, St. Saviourgate Chapel, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. W. BIRKS, F.R.A.S.

CAPE TOWN, Free Protestant Unitarian Church, Hout-street, 6.30 P.M., Rev. R. BALMFORTH.

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July 31	Rev. R. Spears.

Divine Service at 7 p.m.

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OWEN—MONKS—On June 9th, at Cairo-street Chapel, Warrington, by the Rev. F. K. Free-ston, assisted by the Rev. W. H. Drummond, B.A., Segar Owen, A.R.I.B.A., son of Wm. Owen, Esq., J.P., of Warrington, to Edith, daughter of F. Monks, Esq., J.P., of Walton Old Hall.

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